he Holy Ghost
The Sanctifier

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THE HOLY GHOST,

THE SANCTIFIER.

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THE SANCTIFIER.

BY

HENRY EDWARD,

SECOND CARDINAL ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.

Coll. Christi Regis S.J.
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NOTICE.

ALTHOUGH the following pages are on the same subject and follow the same outline as the *Internal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, they are not the same book. This Little Book has been re written throughout for the present series.

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I.

THE DEVOTION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TO THE HOLY GHOST.

1. God is One in absolute perfection; and in that Unity there is no distinction except by the relations which constitute the Persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.[1] All divine worship is therefore given to the Three Persons equally in One God, and in like manner all divine perfections are common to the Three Persons, and none is proper to any so as not to belong equally to all. So also all the divine operations in the creatures of God are alike common to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Nevertheless the Son has a relation to

[1] Concil. Lat. IV. cap. 2, *Damnamus ergo.*

the creatures *proper* to Himself, because He alone is incarnate; He alone has united our manhood to Himself by the hypostatic union.

So also the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Ghost are proper to each as sent and as coming into the world.

And this is the reason or cause of the *appropriation*[2] to the Son of the office of Redeemer, and to the Holy Ghost of the office of Sanctifier; nevertheless not as excluding the other Divine Persons from the work of redemption and of sanctification.

Charity, and the operations of charity and of grace *ad extra*, are appropriated to the Holy Ghost. They express His hypostatic character as the term of the Procession of the Love of the Father and of the Son. The Procession is proper to the Holy Ghost, but the operations are common to the Father and to the Son.

2. In this sense, then, we can and ought,

[2] Card. Franzelin, *De Deo Trino*, sect. i. th. xiii. p. 208.

under the guidance of the Church, to contemplate the operations of the Holy Ghost in the souls of the faithful, in the Church, and in the blessed in heaven. These are relations and operations common, indeed, to the Three Persons, but *appropriate* to the Holy Ghost. And in this office of appropriation, and in these appropriate relations, we can and ought to adore, honour, venerate, and invoke the Holy Ghost; but in this divine and distinct worship we never exclude the Father and the Son. In the three invocations of the Litany we invoke and adore in succession the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost; but in each we invoke and adore the Holy Trinity, as when we invoke the Holy Trinity, One God, we invoke the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The appropriate mission and office of the Holy Ghost, then, is that of the Spirit of Truth, or of the Illuminator and the Sanctifier. 'The charity of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us;' so the sancti-

fying grace, or the grace by which we are made holy, is poured out in our hearts and imparted to us by the Holy Ghost, who dwells in us. Such is our sanctification and the office of the Sanctifier.

3. While, then, we always bear in mind that all the works of almighty power are works of the Ever-Blessed Trinity, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that God is therefore our Creator, our Redeemer, and our Sanctifier, we may contemplate the true and divine sense of appropriation in which we say that the Father is our Creator, the Son our Redeemer, and the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier. It is in this latter sense that we speak of devotion to the Holy Ghost as our Sanctifier. We shall never exclude the Father and the Son from the divine action of our sanctification, which is proper to all the Three Persons as God; but we may speak of the office which is appropriate in the divine economy to the Third Person, that is, to the Holy Ghost.

This appropriation, then, as we have seen, arises from two distinct reasons: the one is that the communication of sanctity has a special affinity to the Person of the Holy Ghost; the other, that as the Son had a special mission into the world to redeem mankind, so the Holy Ghost has a special mission into the world to sanctify those who are faithful to the Redeemer.

4. The Church throughout the world loves and adores the Son in His mission, His Incarnation, His coming, His Passion, Resurrection, Ascension, and glory, as Head of the Church, at the right hand of the Father, and His perpetual presence in the midst of us in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

So also the Church loves and adores the Holy Ghost in His mission, His advent on the day of Pentecost, His indwelling presence in the Church, His perpetual assistance which preserves the Church from error, His operations in the Seven Sacra-

ments, and in His inward presence by actual grace in every individual soul, and by habitual grace in all who are sanctified.

For this cause we worship the Incarnate Son at Christmas and the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, which S. Augustine calls the *Dies Natalis Spiritus Sancti*, the Nativity of the Holy Ghost.

In its most solemn actions the Church specially invokes and worships the Holy Ghost. The Œcumenical Councils, in which the whole Church is present, are congregated in the Holy Ghost. Their first act is to offer the Mass of the Holy Ghost. They invoke His guidance twice by the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, and by the prayer *Adsumus Domine Sancte Spiritus advenius ... in Nomine Tuo specialiter aggregati.* And what is done in an Œcumenical Council is done in every Council of a province and every Synod of a diocese.

The Mass and the Office of Pentecost are the solemn and public adoration of the Holy Ghost by the Church; the Hymns of

the Holy Ghost, the Office, and the Litany are the response of the faithful to this authoritative devotion of the Church in its divine tradition and its universal ritual.

In this the Church perpetuates the mind and voice of the Apostles. In the New Testament the Holy Ghost is named ninety times, and as the Holy Spirit forty times; so present and so prominent were the mission and the dispensation of the Holy Ghost in the faith of those who had received the illumination of the day of Pentecost, and were kindled by its tongues of fire.

The Epistles of S. Paul are pervaded by the consciousness of the presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church,[3] in our bodies,[4] in our hearts,[5] and of His office as the Spirit of Wisdom,[6] of adoption,[7] of sanctification.[8]

So, too, the mission and presence of the Holy Ghost were habitually in the minds of

[3] Ephes. ii. 22.
[4] 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.
[5] Gal. iv. 6.
[6] S. John xv. 26.
[7] Rom. viii. 15.
[8] Rom. xv. 16.

the first Disciples of the Apostles, and in the Fathers of the Church, as in S. Irenæus, S. Basil, S. Ambrose, and S. Augustine.

So likewise in the Doctors of the Church, as S. Bonaventure and S. Thomas, to whom is ascribed the *Veni Creator Spiritus.*

So also in the Saints, as in S. Francis, S. Philip, S. Teresa, who all were known by their special devotion to the Holy Ghost, our Light and Sanctifier.

If, then, it should seem to any one that this call to love and adore the Holy Ghost be new and unused in the Church, let him rather examine and see whether he be himself in harmony with the mind of the Church; for the mind of the Church is the mind of the Spirit by Whom all the divine worship and all the special devotions of Fathers and Doctors and Saints are inspired, and from Whom they flow.

II.

SALVATION BY SANCTIFYING GRACE.

1. To be saved is to be sanctified; for the Sanctifier casts out sin. These two things are distinct, but indivisible. We are sanctified by grace. But grace is not only an influence, or a quality, or a power, or an agency working in us. It is also the action of a Divine Person present with us, dwelling in us, imparting to us an interior, supernatural, spiritual quality of holiness which abides as a habit in those who are sanctified and united with Himself. There is, therefore, an Uncreated Grace or Gift, which is the Sanctifier Himself, for the Holy Ghost is *Donum Dei.* There is also a created grace, which is the quality of holiness shed abroad by Him in the hearts of all in whom He dwells. And these operations of the Sanctifier are manifold. They begin by lights in the intellect, by stings in the conscience, by impulses in the will, by

drops of sweetness in the heart, by which He awakens, rouses, and converts, if they will obey and be led by Him. This is His actual grace. His operations are also permanent, indwelling, and sanctifying, conforming the mind and heart and will to Himself, and reigning over them by the obedience of that conformity. This is His abiding or habitual grace.

2. But there is another distinction of grace. His divine action prevents all our inward life. It goes before all our supernatural acts. We should never have believed if His light had not illuminated us from our baptism, or guided us through the preambles of faith, and moved us with a love of the truth, till we found the Divine Teacher whom till then we did not know. We should never have loved Him if He had not shown Himself to us, and poured out His love into our hearts. S. Paul repeats the words of God by Isaias, 'I was found by them that did not seek Me: I appeared openly to them that asked not after

Me.'[1] We love Him because He first loved us. This is His preventing grace. He loved us before we were created, redeemed us before we were born in sin, regenerated us when we were unconscious, sustained us in the innocence of baptismal grace, and converted us after our falls by penance and return to God. In all this the Holy Ghost was first in His divine action. In creation, redemption, regeneration, we had no will of our own as yet. In all the rest of our life and warfare and renewal, the consent and co-operation of our own will is the condition of our sanctification; for our will has the power, as S. Augustine says, 'to accept or not to accept'—that is, to reject —the grace of God. It was by no will of our own that we were elevated to a supernatural state of eternal salvation. It was His sovereign act of grace. But, being once elevated to a supernatural state, every good act we do is prevented by a divine action; 'for it is God that worketh in us to will

[1] Rom. x. 20.

and to accomplish of His own good will.'[2]

3. Therefore this divine action of the Sanctifier is not only in the beginning or the outset of our spiritual life. It goes with us through every moment of our probation, aiding, helping, co-operating with our operation, and giving us a constant increase of grace as we use the grace we have. 'To every one that hath shall be given.'[3] Every act of faith obtains an increase of faith; every act of hope ripens it into confidence; every act of charity draws down a larger outpouring into the heart. Every act of piety, humility, self-denial, generosity, obtains an increase each in its kind. There are two operations always going on in us: the operation of the Sanctifier, and our co-operation with Him. His divine intelligence elevates, enlarges, and illuminates our intelligence. His will pervades and conforms our will to His own. He presides over our inward life, and, by

[2] Phil. ii. 13. [3] S. Luke xix. 21.

presiding, perfects it. It is thus that we are sanctified. Every act of co-operation is a merit in God's sight, and every merit is linked by the promise of God to a reward; and that reward is a constant growth in our spiritual life, and an earnest of the life to come, when every merit shall have its recompense, and measure for measure, every grace shall be changed into glory. 'The just shall shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.'[4] Such is His co-operating grace. In every moment of our life it is pressing upon our will, and waiting for our free correspondence with the divine will, which is always waiting for us. 'Behold, I stand at the gate, and knock. If any man shall hear My voice, and open to Me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.'[5] These words were applied by the Council of Sens to the continuity of the presence and the work of the Sanctifier in us.

[4] S. Matt. xiii. 43. [5] Apoc. iii. 20.

4. And further. What God begins He perfects. He crowns His own work in us by the sovereign gift of perseverance. 'He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved;'[6] and he alone. But without a special help of God no one would persevere. On God's part we have given to us grace enough to persevere; on our part there is always a failure. It is physically possible that we may with an arrow strike a mark a thousand times; it is morally certain we should not. It is possible that we should retrace a thousand steps in the snow and leave the same footprints behind us; but it is certain that no man would do it. So, though it be possible for us to co-operate with any grace which the Sanctifier bestows on us, it is certain that we shall not do so. Our want of strength and of vigilance, or our slack correspondence with great graces of the Holy Ghost, and our many sins of omission—these undermine our perseverance, and incline us continually to fail; so

[6] S. Matt. x. 22.

that if there were not a continual support to our weakness, we should not endure to the end. Now this perseverance is twofold: on our part it is a duty, and on God's part it is a gift. On our part it consists in three things, namely, in fidelity to grace, punctuality in duty, and delicacy of conscience; and on God's part it consists also in three things, namely, in a guidance which leads us in the way of His will, a sheltering providence which guards us from dangers, and a continual replenishment of His Holy Spirit, which sustains our spiritual life and strength.

From all this it follows, first, that on God's part our salvation can never fail. The Council of Trent teaches that He never forsakes any one who does not forsake Him first;[7] secondly, that if we forsake Him it is our own free act; and thirdly, that our own act is by our own free will, so that if we fail of eternal life it is by our own wilful fault; for as it is certain that

[7] Sess. VI. c. 11.

no soul can be saved except by the grace of God, so it is certain that no soul will be lost except by the perversity of its own free will.

In our sanctification, then, the first grace and the last are in the hand of God. In all other graces our will must co-operate. And the work of the Sanctifier in us is one, manifold, and progressive. It is like the growth of a tree springing from a root, spreading into branches, and bearing its leaves and fruits in season. It begins in the grace of regeneration, in faith, hope, charity, and sanctifying grace; it expands into the seven gifts, and bears the twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost, and is made ripe and perfect in the eight beatitudes. As the Church is sanctified, so is the soul of each of its members by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, the Giver of light and sanctity, and by the manifold and progressive growth, fruitfulness, and maturity of our spiritual life from its first consciousness to its last perfection. Thus far we have spoken of grace as the

operation of the Sanctifier imparting holiness as a quality infused into the soul. But we shall have to speak with greater exactness of the mode and kind of His various and distinct operations. We shall have to speak of virtues, gifts, fruits, and beatitudes; and it will be therefore best here, at the outset, carefully to define the meaning of these terms, and to distinguish them from each other. We will follow the teaching and the words of S. Thomas.

1. A virtue is a habit.[8] When the power that is in us by nature is put forth into uniform and continuous acts, a habit is formed. The right use of our free-will is a virtue, or, indeed, is virtue in itself. It then becomes a disposition of the intellectual and moral powers to goodness and rectitude, and it is to the soul what health is to the body. A habit is also an active principle. Such are the four cardinal virtues: prudence, which perfects the intellect; justice, which perfects the will; temper-

[8] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 1. 2, q. 55.

ance, which restrains the appetites for pleasure; fortitude, which sustains the evils of pain and fear. Such are the chief virtues of the natural order.

But we are speaking now of the supernatural order; and the chief supernatural virtues are three—faith, hope, and charity. But these virtues are habits, and active principles not acquired, but superadded to nature, and infused by the Holy Ghost. In the order of nature the intellect and the will are ordered or directed towards God, as He is the beginning and the end of nature. But the reason and the will cannot be ordered and directed sufficiently by nature towards God, as He is the object of supernatural bliss. The supernatural virtues of faith, hope, and charity are therefore necessary to elevate the reason and the will to God as the object of supernatural bliss. Faith, then, gives to the intellect a supernatural principle and a supernatural light by which truths, exceeding the order of nature, are seen and believed. Hope

gives to the will a direction and a motion towards that supernatural object, and to all possible means of attaining to it. Charity gives a spiritual union by which the intellect and the will are changed and transformed into the likeness of that object of bliss. Faith, hope, and charity therefore are habits which unite the intellect and the will with God, and for that reason are called theological.

2. The gifts of the Holy Ghost are also called virtues; but they are somewhat more. They dispose the reason and the will to a more prompt and perfect conformity to the objects of faith, hope, and charity. They are also habits, for they abide in the reason and the will; and in the measure in which they are obeyed and exercised they perfect the reason and the will. Three are moral—holy fear, piety, and fortitude; and these perfect the will. Four are intellectual—intellect and science, counsel and wisdom; and these perfect the reason in its speculative and its practical

operations. They differ from the theological virtues. Both are infused by the Holy Ghost; both are directed to the same object; both abide in and perfect the same subject; but the gifts move and guide the intellect and the will in a higher, more special, and more perfect way. They produce heroic acts, and the perfection of the Saints.[9]

3. The fruits of the Holy Ghost are the acts which are produced by the virtues and the gifts. They are called fruits because they come from the substance and the sap of supernatural sanctity in the soul, and because they have in them a sweetness both to those who bear the fruits and to those who partake of them. S. Paul counts up twelve fruits which have three aspects—to God, to our neighbour, and to ourselves. They mortify the flesh, and sanctify the soul.[10]

4. The beatitudes are eight perfections in which the virtues, gifts, and fruits rise

[9] S. Thomæ, *Summa*, 2. 2, q. 68. [10] Ibid. q. 70.

and terminate. They differ from the virtues and the gifts because they are sometimes states, as mourning and peace, hunger and thirst after justice; moreover they are sometimes acts, as mercifulness and fortitude in persecution. Nevertheless they move and elevate the will to a higher and nearer approach to the eternal beatitude, and in so doing they have a double reward. They give now in this life a foretaste of the eternal beatitude, and they insure the attainment of its fulness. They thereby beatify the soul even in this evil world.[11]

O God, the Holy Ghost, I beseech Thee through the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, to sanctify me wholly, that my whole body and soul and spirit may be Thy dwelling-place, and all my words and works may be begun, continued, and ended in Thee, to the glory of the Father and of the Son, who, with Thee, One God, liveth and reigneth for ever.

[11] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 69.

III.

THE ADOPTION OF SONS.

God would 'have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.'[1] But from all eternity He has predestined not all men, but some only, to come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Whom He foreknew He predestinated;[2] whom He predestinated to the means of salvation He called by the word of faith, and justified by water and the Holy Ghost, and glorified with the grace of adoption and the Spirit of the Son. The Council of Trent says that 'faith is the root of our whole justification.'[3] In the beginning faith preceded baptism, because adults were baptised; now baptism precedes faith, because in our infancy we are unconscious of our regeneration and adoption as sons of God.

The Council says that the final cause of our justification is the glory of God; the

[1] 1 Tim. ii. 4.
[2] Rom. viii. 29, 30.
[3] Sess. VI. c. 8.

efficient cause is the mercy of God, who washes, sanctifies, seals, and anoints us with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is also the pledge of our inheritance; the meritorious cause is the Passion of Jesus Christ our Lord; the instrumental cause is baptism, without which none are justified; and the formal cause is the justice of God: not that justice by which He Himself is just, but the justice by which we are made just by sanctification of the Holy Ghost dwelling in us.[4]

There is, then, a difference between the original justice in which the first Adam was constituted in the beginning, and the justification to which we are restored in the second Adam.

1. The first Adam was, as the Council of Trent says, constituted in grace. It did not say created in grace, lest grace should be thought to be a part essential or integral of human nature. Human nature is perfect in soul and body. Grace is given by the

[4] Sess. IV. c. 7.

supernatural presence and indwelling of the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier. It is a superadded perfection. Adam therefore had three distinct perfections: first, the natural perfection of soul and body; secondly, the supernatural perfection of sanctifying grace and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost; and thirdly, the preternatural perfection arising from the union of the natural and supernatural perfection—that is to say, the immortality of the body and the integrity or order and harmony of the soul. All affections and passions were subject to the reason and to the will, illuminated and sanctified by the Holy Ghost. These three perfections constitute original justice. By sin this original justice was lost. The supernatural perfection departed, the preternatural was forfeited; the body became mortal; the soul was wounded with three wounds—that is, with darkness in the intellect, with disorder in the passions, and with instability in the will. This privation of grace is original sin. The penalties

remain upon our human nature, which is thereby changed into a worse condition, but the nature of them in body and soul remains essentially the same.

2. By our regeneration we are restored, not to original justice, but to a state of justification. We receive once more the grace of sanctification and the indwelling presence of the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier. And because, through the merits of the Incarnate Son, 'the Spirit of the Son' is 'sent forth into our hearts,' we are thereby made sons of God, and cry, 'Abba, Father.' Adam was the son of God by creation; so are we: but we are more; we are sons of God by adoption and by union with the Eternal Son, who, as S. Athanasius says, was made the Son of man that we might be made the sons of God. We have still human nature in its integrity, but wounded. The penalties of sin remain upon us, but the privation of grace is reversed. We are once more constituted in grace, and adopted to a higher sonship and inheritance

as heirs of God 'and joint-heirs with Christ.'[5]

The instrumental cause of this justification is baptism by water and the Holy Ghost. And the grace of baptism is regeneration or a new birth by the infusion of sanctifying grace and the inhabitation of the Sanctifier in our hearts. By this we are justified, the inherited guilt of original sin is absolved, the privation of grace is reversed by the infusion of sanctity and of faith, hope, and charity, with the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. The body is mortal and the soul is wounded, but there is no sin in these penalties as penalities of the fall. They who are justified are the friends of God and members of His household; and 'though,' as the Council of Trent says, 'in this mortal life, howsoever holy they be, they may still fall into light and daily faults which are called venial, they do not for that cause cease to be just.'[6] 'For God never forsakes those who are once justified

[5] Rom. viii. 17. [6] Sess. VI. c. 11.

by His grace, unless He be first forsaken by them.'[7] And if, by mortification of the flesh in body and in mind, and by obedience to the Sanctifier renewing the will, they persevere, God will keep them from evil. The sin that is in them is left for their trial, that they may war against it and win their crown. For this is the crown of justice which, after the conflicts and the course, shall be given by the just Judge to all who love His appearing. 'For it is He Himself, Christ Jesus, who, as the virtues of the Head descend into the members, and as the vine into the branches, pours out continually His influence into those who are justified; and this strength always goes before all their good works, and accompanies and follows them,'[8] so that nothing shall ever be wanting to their perseverance. Such is the state of the sons of God, on whom, as S. John Chrysostom and S. Jerome interpret the word, the glory of the

[7] Sess. VI. c. 11.
[8] Ibid. c. 7.

adoption was bestowed in baptism by the indwelling of the Sanctifier.

O God the Holy Ghost, by whom the charity of God is given to us that we should be called and be the sons of God, I bless Thee for my predestination, vocation, regeneration, and adoption; and I beseech Thee, through the merits of Jesus Christ, to give me the heart of a son—loving, filial, and dutiful; that by the power of Thy grace I may live as a son of God, and be conformed to Jesus in humility; and having this hope in me, I may 'sanctify myself even as He is pure.'

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

IV.

THE VIRTUE OF FAITH.

FAITH is the first supernatural virtue or habit infused in baptism. It is a virtue

or active power of a supernatural kind residing in the intellect, but acting also on the will, for it is made perfect by charity.[1] The Council of Trent calls it 'the root of all our justification,' because 'without faith it is impossible to please God.'

S. Paul describes faith as 'the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things' not seen as yet, or 'that appear not.'[2] And S. Thomas says that 'faith is to believe what we cannot see;' or, once more, 'faith is believing in the word of God.' It is therefore a supernatural power infused into our reason, and abiding in it as a habit of our new nature.

The nature of divine faith will be best understood if we consider, (1) what is its origin, or whence it comes; (2) what is its matter, or what it believes; and (3) what is its motive, or why it believes.

1. As to the origin of faith, it is not by nature in man or by man—that is, it is not

[1] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 4.

[2] Heb. xi. 1.

in ourselves. It is a grace not due to our nature. It is beyond its limits; but it is not an extension of our natural reason, as a lens extends our natural faculty of sight. It is a habit distinct from all these, and above them all. When reason has done its work, faith begins. The last act of reason goes before the first act of faith; but faith is the perfection of reason. When we have examined the preambles or evidences which prove Christianity to be a divine revelation, faith then believes it. When we have examined the evidences which prove the divine unity and authority of the Church, faith then believes and submits itself. It ceases to be a critic that it may become a disciple of a Divine Teacher. Faith, then, is a grace of the Holy Ghost. It pervades the intellect in the form of light, by which it sees the truth; charity moves the heart in the form of piety, inclining it to love the truth, and the will, in the form of an impulse, to believe it. But the grace of

faith, which works in adults by reasoning and preambles, was infused into us in our baptism when we were unconscious. As we were unconscious of the three faculties of intellect, memory, and will, which were in us in our first birth, as the germs of all intellectual and moral perfection, so the three virtues of faith, hope, and charity were infused into us in our second birth in the form of permanent habits, awaiting the voice of the Church to call them into activity. They are elicited and made perfect by use, or by fidelity to the Holy Ghost who gave them. By exercise they become more constraining and mature. As the eye becomes keen by practice and the ear by daily use, so faith and hope and charity become more vivid and powerful in the measure in which they are cultivated by use and exercise.

The origin, then, of faith is in the preventing grace of God, which, not only in those who are baptised in infancy, but also in adults, precedes and guides every act

of the reason, and inclines every free movement of the will.

2. Next the matter of faith, or what we believe, is the word of God. 'Faith, then, cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.'[3] The word of God is the whole revelation of the day of Pentecost, whether written or unwritten. S. Paul draws out the lineage of the faithful from Abel to his own day, and describes the life of the Patriarchs and Saints of the Old Law as a life of faith. They believed in God, their Creator and Friend, and in the heavenly country, where God would reward their fidelity to Him for ever. 'All these died according to faith, not having received the promises, but beholding them afar off, and saluting them, and confessing that they are pilgrims and strangers on the earth.'[4]

He describes the martyrs of the Old Law and the Saints, of whom the world was not worthy; and then he says that

[3] Rom. x. 17. [4] Heb. xi. 13.

without us they were not made perfect—that is, without the knowledge of the Incarnation of the Son and the coming of the Holy Ghost, they were imperfect still in faith. They all believed the word of God, so far as it was then revealed, even as we; but we have received the full and final revelation of the truth in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost was their Teacher and their Sanctifier. But they did not know Him as we do. All Saints and penitents were His creation; they were the first-fruits, we are the harvest. All that the Spirit had ever taught before Christ came, and all that the Anointed One taught at His advent, was filled up and completed by the Holy Ghost at His coming. The whole revelation in Jesus Christ was preached by the Apostles in all the world. This is the word of Christ, by which comes the hearing of faith. There were no Scriptures of the New Testament when the Gospel of the kingdom was preached to all nations. They

heard the living voice of those to whom Jesus had said, 'He that heareth you heareth Me.' Without texts or writings or books they believed, and became disciples of the Holy Ghost. S. Irenæus expressly says that there were nations who had no Scriptures. They believed the truth which was written on their hearts by the Holy Ghost.[5]

The whole light of the day of Pentecost is contained in the Name in which we were baptised; and that Name is expanded into our Baptismal Creed, and the Baptismal Creed expands again into the theology of the Church, as the radiance which flows from a point of light spreads itself in perfect unity. Such is the divine tradition of the Catholic Church, which first filled the world by its living voice, and of which afterwards a part was put in writing by Evangelists and Apostles; but these writings all recognise and point to the divine and perfect revelation which

[5] S. Iren. *Adv. Hæres.* lib. iii. c. iv.

was intrusted to the custody of the Church before the Christian Scriptures were written. The word of the Holy Ghost had been already heard and believed throughout the world. And this whole revelation of the word of God is the matter of faith Nothing can be of divine faith but that which is revealed by God; and therefore no mere human teaching and no mere human wisdom, however pure or true, can be a doctrine of faith. The word of God alone, written and unwritten, is what we believe unto salvation.

3. And lastly, the motive why we believe the word of God is the veracity of God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived. God, *Deus Verus et Verax*, is the Author and motive of our faith. This, therefore, shuts out from faith all human opinion and all human teachers—that is, our own private judgment and the judgment of all other men. Faith can rest on nothing that is uncertain. Where doubt begins, faith ends. All human opinion, all

human judgments, and all human teachers rest only on subjective convictions, and these are uncertain and changeful. No human teacher and no number of human teachers can give us a motive of faith, for none can give us divine certainty. No national religion, no decrees of churches or provinces of churches separated from the unity of the Universal Church, can give a divine and infallible certainty on which to rest our faith. 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.' Nothing but the voice of the Church throughout the world in its passive infallibility, or congregated in council, or the voice of its Head speaking as Universal Teacher of faith and morals in its active infallibility, can assure us that we hear the word of Christ, and, hearing, have the divine certainty of faith. But this continuous voice is the Voice of the Holy Ghost, by whom the Church is illuminated, guided, and assisted in all its definitions of the truth. The Church, in its nineteen Œcumenical

Councils and by its line of Pontiffs, has ever said, and only the Church can say always: 'Visum est Spiritui Sancto et nobis,'—'It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.'[6]

This divine grace of faith, infused into the soul in baptism, abides in it as a habit. It gives what S. Augustine describes as *pius credulitatis affectus*—a pious love of truth, and an inclination to believe it. The earliest consciousness of a regenerate child is pervaded by this faith. There is an affinity between childlike minds and the mind of the Spirit which makes them intuitively and instinctively believe divine and supernatural things. They have an ear to hear the divine voice of the Church; and when it proposes the truth to them, they respond to its teaching with a prompt will. To believe is a second nature to them; and that second nature is the new nature which they have from the Holy Ghost. It is of this our Lord spoke when

[6] Acts xv. 28.

He said to men of mature mind, even to His Apostles, 'Unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall in nowise enter into the kingdom of heaven.'[7]

It is not the will of God that faith should come by reading, but by hearing—that is, it does not come from books, but from a living Voice. Such is the rule of faith. Tertullian says, 'Prior sensus quam liber.' The sense was before the book; and the children of the Church are taught from their infancy as the nations were taught before the Scriptures were written, that is, by the living Voice of the Holy Ghost. Then He spake through the Apostles whom He had inspired; now He speaks through the Church in which He perpetually dwells. He guides it by His perpetual assistance, guarding it from all error, and by it He teaches all who believe. Faith, then, being a grace of the Holy Ghost, may be lost like as humility, chastity, purity, or piety may be lost. These graces may be

[7] S. Matt. xviii. 3.

lost in two ways: by immorality, which deadens the conscience and stupefies the soul, or by speculative doubt, which perverts the reason and ends in infidelity.

The Vatican Council has in two definitions taught us the nature of faith. It says that they who are under the divine teaching of the Church cannot without sin suspend their belief in any Catholic doctrine till they have scientific or argumentative proof of it, for that is an implicit denial of the perpetual office of the Holy Ghost.[8]

It says also that God has a sovereign right to command us to believe, because the created intellect is wholly dependent upon His uncreated intelligence.[9]

And this dependence was formed in us when, by the theological virtue of faith infused by the Holy Ghost in our baptism, our created reason was united to the divine by a supernatural light. Therefore baptism is called our *illumination*, and that illumination is the habit of faith.

[8] Const. Dogm., De Fide Cath. c. iii. [9] Ibid.

O Thou Spirit of Truth, who on the day of Pentecost, by a special mission from the Father and the Son, didst come into this world to abide in the Church for ever, call back by Thy light all those who have fallen from the faith; above all, those who have been robbed of their inheritance of truth by the infidelity of their forefathers. Make them once more to know Thy Personality, Thy Presence, and Thy Office as the Divine and Perpetual Guide of the Church, that they may submit to its voice as disciples, in the obedience of faith. Make me also to count my faith more precious than life itself.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

V.

THE VIRTUE OF HOPE.

From faith, which gives us, as in a glass, a vision of God and of eternity, springs up

the hope of the Beatific Vision. But hope is also a virtue of the Holy Ghost. S. Paul calls God the God of hope. He says, 'The God of hope fill you with all peace and joy in believing, that you may abound in hope and in the power of the Holy Ghost.'[1] He says also that we are 'saved by hope.'[2] Hope is therefore a part of our sanctification.

God is the God of hope because He is that which we hope for—that is, Goodness, Beauty, and Sweetness. He is the Giver of hope because He has revealed Himself, and promised to us His eternal bliss. He is also the Supporter of hope because the grace which He has infused is continually renewed and strengthened by the Holy Ghost.

Hope, then, is a virtue or habit which gives us confidence of eternal bliss, and makes us desire to possess and to use, by God's help, all the means of attaining it.

1. First, as to the nature of hope. Faith

[1] Rom. xv. 13. [2] Rom. viii. 24.

reveals the end of man, and hope desires it. Faith shows us that God is the only adequate, perfective, and eternal end of man; and hope desires it above all things. It is therefore made up of desire and trust.[3]

(1) It is a desire of all good in this life and in the next, a hunger and thirst of the soul for its own proper end, and of all the means which we can reach to insure the attainment of our end, including the gift of final perseverance.

(2) And this desire is confirmed and sustained by a trust or confidence founded upon the character and promises of God, and upon our experience of His goodness and care over us in the past. The more we contemplate God by the light of faith as the fulness of all perfections, of love, mercy, pity, generosity, the more hope grows in strength and in desire. And the more we live in hope, the more we grow in confidence founded upon our own experience of His absolution, His continual

[3] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 17.

support, His secret consolations. It was this experience of which S. Paul said, 'I know whom I have believed, and I am certain that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.'[4]

2. The fruits of hope are, (1) first, appreciation of God *super omnia*, because what faith shows hope reaches after by desire. The experience of the past, and the confidence of the future, make real and present in foretaste that which we hope for. 'How great is the multitude of Thy sweetness which Thou hast hid for them that fear Thee.'[5] It is that foretaste of the eternal sweetness in the kingdom of God that gives to hope its power of realisation.

(2) And from this springs up a fear of los ing God, the object of our hope. But this fear is not servile or mercenary, but filial and full of peace. The more we desire anything, the more we fear to lose it; the higher our hope of gaining it, the greater

[4] 2 Tim. i. 12. [5] Ps xxx. 20.

our pain if we fail. The pain of loss will be greatest in those who were almost saved, if at the last they fall from God, as a shipwreck in sight of the haven is sadder than on the high sea. And this holy fear produces a great humility, a consciousness of our dependence upon God, of the instability of our will, of the instability of our state and strength. It shows us that it is 'by the grace of God that we are that which we are.'[6] Hope casts out all trust in ourselves, but it confirms greatly our trust in God. And this confidence excites in us a constant effort to attain our eternal end, and a careful diligence lest we be disappointed of our hope. There is nothing possible in God's service that hope will not attempt. S. Paul says, 'I can do all things through Christ strengthening me,'[7] or, as the word is, 'strengthening me within.' We may hope and strive for any measure or degree of sorrow for sin, of mortification of self, of detachment from the world, of

[6] 1 Cor. xv. 10. [7] Phil. iv. 13.

singleness of eye, of purity of intention, of holiness of heart, of union with God in charity. All these things are possible, for they are all duties which fall under the commandments, and the degree of their perfection falls under the counsels; and the Holy Ghost never counsels any one to anything without giving the strength to do it. From all this comes one more fruit, a great courage in God's service. So long as we hope for victory, we shall fight manfully. If fear or doubt of mastery come upon us we shall neither strike home nor stand firm against the sin that besets us. So long as we hope to escape from temptations by flight, we put out all speed. If we think escape to be impossible, we slacken speed and are overtaken; and to be overtaken is to be overcome. If we swim for our life, so long as we hope to reach the shore we swim strongly. When we despair of safety, we sink. So in our spiritual life and warfare. Hope gives strength. To faint in our confidence is weakness. It is

to fail in trust of the Holy Ghost, with whom all things are possible. He can make us penitents in fervour and perseverance, and Saints; for God can, even of these stones, raise up Saints for His kingdom.

3. Lastly, the opposites of hope are two.

(1) First, presumption, or blind and baseless hope. Such is the hope of those who, depending on God's mercy, forget His holiness and His justice. And this they do because they neither know their own sinfulness, nor the sinfulness of sin, nor the sanctity of God. They assume that their sins are not beyond the measure of God's patience, and that their own contrition is not the sorrow of the hireling. Such, again, is the hope of those who use all the means of grace without due dispositions of heart. Frequent Communion and a lax life breeds not the hope inspired by the Holy Ghost, but presumption. From this comes trust in self, and an intellectual simulation of piety, which

deceives our own conscience. Then we grow confident in our safety, and venture into the occasions of sin. And being conscious of many things which displease God, and would displease ourselves if our self-love did not speedily turn away from them, we console ourselves, as S. Augustine did, by saying, 'To-morrow and to-morrow' I will turn to God and do penance. In the meanwhile we absolve ourselves with exceeding facility, trusting to make all right before we die. But who can promise himself time or the means of absolution, or the disposition to receive it? Who can say that he will not be then what he is now? And yet he would be afraid to die as he is. This, then, is blind and baseless hope, or presumption.

(2) The other opposite is the direct contrary, or despair. When by mortal sin charity is lost, hope and faith still remain. Hope still desires God, and the experience of His past mercies brings men back to Him. But if hope gives way before the light of

faith, which shows not only the repentance of Peter, but the despair of Judas; not only the light and love of the Sacred Humanity, but the Great White Throne and the worm that dieth not, then the soul falls a second time. Hope dies, and faith alone remains. Such is a terrible state, implanting fear, not holy or filial, but servile, and servilely servile. 'The devils also believe and tremble,'[8] because for them hope is impossible; but a man who has lost hope fears without hope, which is morally the same. From this come many terrible fruits—weariness of God and enmity against Him, a disgust of all sanctity, and a malice against those who persevere in a holy life. Such despair is a foretaste of the worm that dieth not, and of the misery of those who, under the just judgment of God, gnawed 'their tongues for pain.'[9] But no man comes to this save by the fault of his own free will. A love of the Holy Ghost will keep us from this fearful state.

[8] S. James ii. 19. [9] Apoc. xvi. 10.

1. Therefore hope for the greatest gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost. They were all purchased for you by the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ. They are yours by right, for He has given them to you. 'All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.'[10] His redemption purchased them for you, and His sovereignty gives them to you. He has promised to give them to all who ask Him, and He delights in being asked, and asked for the greatest things of His kingdom. He loves to be trusted; and to ask great things is to show great trust in a great love. Timid prayers and low aspirations are false humility, for we ask not for our own merits, but for His. Hope honours Him. Ask for perfect sanctification, for perfect expiation. S. Leonard of Port Maurice used to say, 'I hope to go to heaven without purgatory.' He meant, there is no bound to be set to the love and grace of Jesus Christ. And without a doubt a soul that hopes and aspires for so

[10] 1 Cor. iii. 23.

great a grace will aim and strive at a proportionate perfection in humility, charity, purity, and union with God.

2. From such a hope will spring a great fear of the occasions of sin—that is, even in lawful and innocent things which have been at any time, through the sin that is in us, the cause of our offending God. In themselves they were not temptations. We made them to be so. To go into them willingly again shows a want of appreciation of God, of His love, of His sanctity, of His hatred of sin. It shows, too, that there can be little hatred of sin in us, and that, as S. Augustine says, we avoid sin more from fear of hell than from hatred of evil—that is, that we hate sin less than we hate hell. And this convicts us of a want of generosity, and shows that we serve God for hire; and implies that if we could sin without being eternally lost, we should not be unwilling to offend God and to deface His likeness in our soul.

Hope does not consist in making the

least of our sins, and the most of anything good we may have done. On the contrary, it is a confidence, not in ourselves, but in God, and that in the light of the Holy Ghost, who shows to us all the evil we have done, and all the evil that is in us. He shows us to ourselves in the light in which He sees us. In it we see ourselves, and are overwhelmed; but we do not see Him from whom the light is cast. It is the sign of His presence in us, and we trust in Him for the rest. There are three things which He shows to us.

(1) Our nothingness as creatures. We become conscious that we are dust quickened by the breath of the Holy Ghost. It was He who breathed into the face of Adam, and in him into us, the *spiraculum vitæ*, the breath of life, which lives still by the continuous will of God. If it were withdrawn, we should return at once to the dust.

(2) We learn next our unworthiness as servants. We fail of the end for which we were made; we waste the powers of

nature and the grace of the Holy Ghost; we abuse and squander His seven gifts.

(3) And lastly, He shows us our sinfulness as sons of God and our ingratitude as His friends; for He brings all things to our remembrance — childhood, boyhood, youth, and manhood—with all the long reckoning of sins, mortal and venial, deliberate and half deliberate, of thought and word and deed, by leaving good undone and by doing evil, by our great insensibility and our little love. All this we must learn before we die. And when we learn it we may cast ourselves upon His patient love, which we have so long and so often grieved; and, in spite of all, we may say, 'In Te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in æternum,'—'In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; I shall not be for ever confounded.'

Through the most Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, in which alone is all my trust, I beseech Thee, O most merciful God, the Sanctifier of my soul, that I may

never be confounded of my hope. Take from me both presumption and despair, and fill me with a confidence in Thy power and love, and a consciousness of my own sinfulness. I hope all things from Thee, because Thou art the God of hope, and Thou hast both purchased and promised to me the glory of Thy kingdom and the Vision of Thyself.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

VI.

THE VIRTUE OF CHARITY.

THE essential perfection of God and of man is charity. For 'God is charity; and he that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him.'[1] It is a participation of the Divine Nature and the perfection of the saints in time and in eternity. 'Hope

[1] 1 S. John iv. 16.

confoundeth not, because the charity of God is poured forth into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us.'[2]

Now all charity is love, but not all love is charity; nevertheless we may include the love of nature in that name, if we carefully distinguish the degrees of it. There are four degrees of true charity:

1. The first is the natural love of the supreme good or happiness which every man desires for himself and hopes for.

2. The second is an initial charity, or love of God for His own sake.

3. The third is the love of dilection, by which we choose God as the object of love above all things.

4. The fourth is the love of friendship, by which we love God for His own sake with a love neither mercenary nor mixed, but, according to the measure of our imperfection, with the pure love of sons and of friends.

It is in this last and full sense that

[2] Rom. v. 5.

we speak of charity. It may be defined as the love of friendship, by which we desire all bliss and glory to Him because of His supreme perfections.[3]

Now the first infusion of this charity into our soul was when we were born again by water and the Holy Ghost. And yet this was only the first drop of the fire that fell from heaven, by which we were united to God in the initial perfection of the soul.

1. Charity is God's greatest gift to man, for it is the gift of Himself. When we received it, we received not only the created grace which dwells in us as a habit or supernatural quality, but the uncreated charity of God, which is the Holy Ghost, the Third Person, coequal with the Father and the Son—the Charity of the Father and of the Son, the Bond of the Ever-blessed Trinity. He came to make us the temple of God by His presence dwelling in us. The will is the proper subject of charity, and in our will it

[3] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 23.

dwells. And by this inhabitation God united us to Himself. The charity whereby we love God and our neighbours is the created grace, which is distinct from Him, the Uncreated Charity, but it flows from Him: 'The charity of God is poured forth into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us.' As the sun sheds abroad light, heat, fruitfulness, and ripeness upon all things, and these qualities are distinct from the sun which gives them, so is it with the created and uncreated charity, which are in us so long as we abide in Him. It is by this that we love God above all things, and our neighbour as ourself. There is, then, a rational and lawful love of self. As the love of God is a love of appreciation, whereby we know His perfections and supremacy over all created things, so the rational love of self is a love of appreciation, whereby we know the worth of our own eternal being, made to the image and likeness of God. There is no creature in this world nearer to the perfections of God

than the soul in man. It is made only a little lower than the angels, because it is clothed in a body from the slime of the earth. It is above all other creatures, because it alone is the image of the Creator. As, then, we appreciate our own soul because it is like to God, and belongs to Him by the threefold title of creation, redemption, and sanctification, so we are bound in charity to appreciate the soul of our neighbour, and to be ready, for his salvation, to sacrifice all worldly goods, and even our bodily life—everything indeed except the salvation of our own soul, which is not our own but His who has redeemed us.

2. Now this gift of God is inseparably united with the sanctifying grace whereby we are made holy. Grace is, as we have seen, the divine action of a Divine Person dwelling in us, united to us, and imparting holiness to us.

(1) The graces, therefore, of created charity and created sanctity, though distinct, are indivisible. They flow from the same

source; they come and go together. Where the one is, both are; where one is not, neither can be. They are like the light and the heat of the sun. Where the sun is, they are; where he is not, they cannot be.

(2) For charity is both a part of sanctity and the perfection of all sanctity. It is the chief of all graces. It perfects the soul. Faith and hope and charity perfect the intellect, the heart, and the will; but charity perfects faith and hope. Faith without charity is dead, and hope without charity is powerless to save; but charity contains both hope and faith, and gives to each its perfection. S. Paul says, 'Now there abideth faith, hope, and charity—these three; but the greater of them is charity.'[4] For faith will pass away in vision, and hope in possession; but when they are no more, charity will be made perfect. It will be eternal in the beatific union of the soul with God.

[4] 1 Cor. xiii. 8.

(3) Therefore even in this life it is the essential perfection of the soul. S. Paul calls it 'the bond of perfectness.' It is to the soul what the uncreated charity is to the Ever-blessed Trinity. In us the grace of charity is as the thread which runs through a string of precious stones, or the clasp which holds them together. For charity is the motive without which all our actions are nothing before God. It is the mode or manner in which all we do must be done; it is the measure by which our service of God and man ought to be regulated; it is the maturity which perfects and sanctifies all our life. Therefore S. Paul says, 'If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And if I should have prophecy, and should know all mysteries, and all knowledge, and if I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor,

and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.'[5]

3. Lastly, charity is the beginning of eternal bliss. It is the essence and it is the measure of eternal joys. For the bliss of heaven is charity made perfect, and according to the measure of charity in this life will be the glory in eternity. The Council of Florence teaches that the bliss of the Saints is according to their merits; but the essence of all merit is charity.

(1) Therefore our share in the Beatific Vision will be according to our merit, and our merit will be according to our charity. No act of charity will go without its reward; and the least acts perhaps may have the greatest merits because of the greater charity from which they sprung. The widow's cake, and the widow's mite, and the cup of cold water, and the spices that were bought, but never needed, for Jesus was already risen: and every kind word,

[5] 1 Cor xiii. 1-3.

and gentle tone, and loving watchfulness in little things, by which the humblest and most homely life is turned to gold, and transfigured in secret before God and the Guardian Angels—all these shall have a measure of bliss and glory which the world cannot conceive, because it seeth not the Holy Ghost, neither knoweth Him. These are the daily miracles of the Sanctifier, secret as the ministries which ripen the corn and make the wild-flowers perfect in form and hue, when no eye of man shall ever see them.

(2) It is, above all, this tissue of little things with great motives which weaves the 'fine linen, glittering and white'—that is, 'the justifications of the Saints.'[6] In these things especially consists the conforming of the heart to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to the spotless heart of His Blessed Mother. And they who are most conformed to Him are most like to God, for their whole being is transformed into charity, and God is

[6] Apoc. xix. 8.

charity; and it is by conformity to Him that 'we shall see Him as He is.'[7]

(3) And this vision of God will be in the measure of our capacity, and our capacity will be in the measure of our conformity to Him: 'In Thy light we shall see light.'[8] As S. Irenæus says, 'They that see the light are in the light, and they that see God shall be in God.' They will not all be of equal capacity, but they will be all full. 'One is the glory of the sun, another the glory of the moon, and another the glory of the stars; for star differeth from star in glory.'[9] The many measures there will be according to the many measures here of charity to God and man. As the vision of faith has been, so will be the vision of glory; and as the heart has here been dilated with the love of God, so there will be its capacity of bliss.

1. Now the grace of charity may be increased all our life long if we live in

[7] 1 S. John iii. 2. [9] 1 Cor. xv. 41.
[8] Ps. xxxv. 10

charity, and are faithful to its inspirations. It may grow from the last gleam of the smoking flax to the fire of the Seraphim, and that in two ways.

(1) By acquisition; for every act of charity, even every internal act which from want of power cannot be put into effect, receives a proportionate increase of the grace of charity. All the day long we may turn our thoughts, words, and actions into gold; and even the least and most unnoticed and most transient acts of loving hearts are like the filing of the gold. The very dust of gold is gold. Every several act of charity towards God, towards the Sacred Heart, towards the Holy Ghost, brings a proportionate increase of charity.

(2) The other way of increase is by the infusion of grace which comes from the charity of God. In every confession and Communion, besides the grace of the Sacrament, which is the same in all who are worthy, there is a sacramental grace in proportion to the capacity and devotion of

each. What must have been the increase of love in every Communion of the spotless heart of the Mother of God, of the beloved disciple, and, to come nearer to ourselves, of S. Francis of Sales. What may have been the continual growth of charity in every Communion of S. Mary of Magdala and of every penitent soul in all the world. God gives His charity as a sovereign gift, especially in prayer, to those who pray, to all who love His law, to all who hunger and thirst after justice. As the showers that water the earth, and as the sun that kindles its multiplying life, so the charity of God is always descending upon those whose hearts are open before Him to receive it.

2. It is certain that charity may be increased, but it has been questioned whether charity can be diminished. As to its essence, it is like life, which cannot be and not be. Charity is the life of the soul; and the soul is either living or dead, as charity is or is not in it. So far charity cannot

be diminished. But as life may be vigorous or declining, and as its operations and powers and functions may be strong or feeble, so with charity. Charity may be weakened, and that with a dangerous facility. By every uncharitable act or thought, howsoever venial, it loses somewhat of its delicacy and fervour: by the mixture of its motives with the world, with pleasure, with interest, with self-seeking, with reflections upon self. Charity is fervent in the measure in which it is pure. God loves our love in the measure in which we love Him for His own sake, and serve Him purely for love. The least act of pure love is more precious in His sight than a whole ocean of charitable works and contributions which are mixed up and debased by worldly fashion, excitement, and self in its thousand forms. Such charity may be likened to the troubled sea, which cannot rest, casting up, too often, mire and dirt.

3. But though charity cannot be diminished it is certain that it may be lost, and

that utterly; and in a moment. One mortal sin will quench it. S. Jerome says of a certain soul, 'In the morning thou wast as a star in its radiance, and before evening thou art changed into the blackness of a coal.' One mortal sin of the flesh or of the spirit, and the friendship with God is broken, sanctifying grace is lost, and the soul is dead. This explains the deadliness of heresy and schism. The Church is the visible presence of God the Holy Ghost, that is, of the Spirit of truth and of charity. Heresy is a resistance of the known truth, and a sin against the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth. Schism is a sin against the unity of charity, and therefore against the love of God and of our brethren. So, again, fraudulent acts which rob our neighbour, false witness which murders his fair name, detraction by speaking and by listening, which is the work of 'the accuser of the brethren'[10]—all these quench the Spirit, and the Spirit is

[10] Apoc. xii. 10.

Charity. In like manner evil thoughts, rash judgments, cold hearts, ill-wills, smouldering resentments, cherished dislikes, secret and indulged aversions—all these extinguish the charity of God in us. 'We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.'[11] Therefore, if we do not love them we have not passed that gulf; or, perhaps, we have passed back again from life unto death because we love them not, for 'He that loveth not abideth in death.'[12]

4. One more truth remains. Charity is God's gift, and when lost can never be regained except by a new sovereign gift of God. The will of man cannot regain it. It is as much out of our reach as the throne on which God reigns. (1) The soul without charity is spiritually dead, and the dead cannot raise themselves. The voice that said to Lazarus, 'Come forth,' must say to us, 'I absolve thee,' or we shall lie in the grave. (2) All acts that we do when out

[11] 1 S. John iii. 14. [12] Ibid.

of charity are works of the dead. We are like the 'trees of autumn,' as S. Jude says. The summer is over. We are 'without fruit,' for the life is gone, 'plucked up by the roots.' Once we were planted in the river of life; but our root is dead. Such is the world in which the charity of God has ceased to reign. It is twice dead, by original and by actual sin, and spreads as the valley of dry bones; they are many of all nations, and they are very dry, for they are very dead. And because iniquity abounds, the charity of many who yet live is growing cold.

O God the Holy Ghost, who art the charity of the Father and the Son, cast out of me, by Thy presence, all that offends Thy purity and Thy fervour. Thine 'eyes are as a flame of fire,' and Thy fervour as the sun in its strength. Dilate my heart by the expansion of Thy love in me, that I may now, in this evil world, love Thee with all my strength, and my neighbour

as myself; and that in Thy eternal kingdom I may see Thee by the light of glory, and be united to Thee in the Vision of Peace.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

VII.

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST.

THE seven gifts of the Holy Ghost were first revealed in the prophecy of Isaias, who, foretelling the coming of the Messias or the Christ, that is, of the Anointed One, says, 'There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root, and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness; and he shall be filled with the fear of the Lord.'[1] These seven

[1] Isaias xi. 1-3.

gifts dwelt in fulness first in Jesus, the Head of the Mystical Body, and then from Him they descend upon the whole Church, and upon every member of the same. It is of this S. John writes, 'Ye have the unction from the Holy One, and know all things. Let that unction which you have received from Him abide in you, and you have no need that any man teach you.'[2] These gifts are infused with the three theological virtues and the sanctifying grace whereby we were made sons of God in our regeneration by water and the Holy Ghost.

They are therefore distinct from the three theological virtues, which are supernatural and active habits, uniting the soul with God by faith, by hope, and by charity. These gifts also are permanent and active habits of a more special and perfect kind, by which the intellect and the will are made prompt in co-operation and obedience

[2] 1 S. John ii. 20, 27.

to the inspirations of the Holy Ghost.[3] Their office is as follows:

1. First they elicit or call out the activity of the will and of the intellect in the exercise of faith, hope, and charity; and in perfecting these they perfect the reason, the heart, and the will, that is, both the natural faculties and the supernatural habits of the soul. They give to them a promptness in corresponding with the Holy Ghost, and a perfection in their operations. They have been well described as the sails by which the soul is carried onward in its course. The more fully they are spread, the speedier is the course. If they are furled by sin or reefed by indolence, the course is slackened and stayed, till all progress is lost, and the soul lies motionless as a ship upon a stagnant sea.

2. Next they cultivate the spiritual powers of the soul. They give to the spiritual sight a quick and sure discernment of truth and of 'the mind of the

[3] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 1. 2, q. 68.

Spirit.' They enable it to perceive the meaning of the commandments both in the letter and in the spirit. They give an intuition by which to know what is the will of God, what is the vocation by which He calls us, what is the way of counsels and of perfection. They give also a foresight which seems to forecast and to foretell the consequences of our actions, an intuition of the future, of its duties, and of its dangers. They cultivate also the ear, so that a spiritual hearing is opened within the natural ear of sense. It was of this that our Lord spoke when He said, 'He that hath ears to hear let him hear.'[4] 'He that heareth you heareth Me;' and S. Paul, 'Faith cometh by hearing.'[5] This is the reason why so many hear and so few believe. The spiritual ear is closed and heavy. The seven gifts give also to the soul a spiritual taste, of which the Psalmist speaks when he says, 'Taste, and see that

[4] S. Matt. xiii. 9.

[5] Rom. x. 17.

the Lord is sweet,'[6] and 'How great is the multitude of Thy sweetness which Thou hast hid for them that fear Thee.'[7] And S. Paul contrasts those who are perfected by these gifts with those who do not know them. 'What man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of a man that is in him? So the things that are of God no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit of God, that we may know the things that are given us from God; which things also we speak, not in the learned words of human wisdom, but in the doctrine of the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. The sensual man perceiveth not those things that are of the Spirit of God; for it is foolishness unto him, and he cannot understand, because it is spiritually examined. But the spiritual man judgeth all things, and he himself is judged of no man.'[8]

[6] Ps. xxxiii. 9.
[7] Ibid. xxx. 20.
[8] 1 Cor. ii. 11-15.

3. And by cultivating the faculties and virtues of the soul they raise it to perfection. The reason has four lights : the light of nature and of faith and of natural prudence and of supernatural prudence. Upon these come the four gifts which make the reason perfect. The gifts of intellect and of wisdom make it perfect in its speculative and contemplative powers ; the gifts of science or knowledge and of counsel perfect its practical powers of discernment and of judgment. The other three gifts perfect the will. First, by a holy fear of sin ; next, by a filial love and piety towards God ; and lastly, by a fortitude in obedience and in suffering for the truth and for the will of God. The perfections of the intellect and of the will constitute the perfection of the whole soul.

Now it is especially by these three gifts that perfect the will that Saints are created. Holy fear, filial piety, and fortitude form the perfection of children, of the poor, and

of the poor in spirit, such as S. Francis, S. Philip, S. Charles.

It is the four that perfect the intellect that create the Doctors of the Church, such as S. Athanasius, S. Augustine, S. Anselm, S. Thomas, among its scientific teachers of sacred science; S. Bonaventure, S. Edmund, S. Bernard, S. Alphonsus, among its pastors and guides of souls.

It is the union of these gifts in the unity of the Church that has wrought out the supernatural legislation of the canon laws, the definitions of Councils, and the scientific tradition of theology, dogmatic and moral, mystical and ascetical.

It is the stifling and the loss of these seven gifts that has made sinners and heretics, worldlings and fools, who make the fool's bargain with Satan, and to gain the world sell their soul.

O God, the Father of lights, from whom cometh every best and every perfect gift, grant that the seven gifts of the Holy

Ghost may have their perfect work in my intellect and in my will. Cast out of me all sloth and sensuality, all presumption and pride, and everything which hinders the illumination and sanctification of my soul. May the Holy Ghost come upon me, and the power of the Most High keep me from all sin, and fill me with the sevenfold gift of His presence.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

VIII.

THE GIFT OF HOLY FEAR.

THE seven gifts have an order among themselves. They form a hierarchy of which wisdom is the highest, and the lowest, because the first, is holy fear. But that which is lowest comes first in the order of our sanctification. *Initium sapientiæ timor Domini.* The fear of the Lord is the beginning of our conversion, while

wisdom is its maturity. It is the first step in the ladder which reaches to heaven.

We will begin, then, with holy fear. Now of fear there are four kinds.

(1) The first is the fear of man and of the world.[1] This fear worketh death. It is the fear of those who are 'pleasers of men;' they fear their blame or their ridicule or their power; they are afraid of losing their favour, their praise, or their good will. That is, they are pleasers of men rather than of God. S. Paul says, 'If I yet please men I should not be a servant of Christ.'[2]

(2) The second kind of fear is the servile fear of death, judgment, and hell. By this fear some are restrained from many sins. They neither hate sin nor love God; and they would commit any sin if fear of hell did not keep them in bondage.

(3) The third kind is the imperfect or initial fear, which is from a mixed motive, partly from fear of pain, partly from the

[1] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 19, &c.

[2] Gal. i. 10.

love of God. It is a fear springing from faith, and therefore is a grace from the Holy Ghost; but it has in it a mixture of the servile fear of sinners with the fear of the children of God. It is of this fear that S. John says, 'Perfect charity casteth out fear.'[3]

(4) The fourth kind is the filial fear which springs chiefly from the love of God.[4] It is purified by love, which casts out the servile fear. This fear in its divine perfection was in the deified Soul of our Saviour. It consists in a consciousness of the sanctity, the majesty, and the power of God, and in a reverence, dependence, and submission of will. Such it was in the life and death of the Son of God. It pervaded His life of obedience; it was made perfect in His agony in the Garden, and in His Passion upon the Cross. This fear is the gift of the Holy Ghost. But in us there will always be a fear of falling into sin, and

[3] 1 S. John iv. 18.

[4] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 19, 8.

of losing God in eternity, which to the Son of God was impossible. Filial fear therefore springs from the grace of charity, for what we love we fear to lose. The effects or operations of the gift of holy fear are chiefly these:

1. First, a consciousness of our own sinfulness and danger of falling from God. (1) The Second Council of Orange[5] said that we have nothing of our own except *peccatum et mendacium*, sin and falsehood. It teaches that this is all we have of our own; that we have our nature and everything that is good in it from God, but that our weak and perverse will has made it sinful and false. That is our work. The inner life of man, excepting penitents and Saints, is a world of disorder, wildness, and confusion. The ceaseless multiplication of actions, words, thoughts, desires, deliberate and indeliberate; the incessant activity of what S. James calls

[5] Concil. Araus. II. can. 22, A.D. 529. 'Nemo habet de suo, nisi mendacium et peccatum.'

rotam nativitatis nostræ,[6] 'the wheel of nature;' the perpetual motion of our inward life, which never rests while we are awake, and, so far as we know, never ceases even while we sleep;—all this is a motive of fear to any one who has the light of the Holy Ghost in his conscience. It was this that made S. Philip continually say, 'Lord, keep Thy hand upon my head; for if Thou shouldst let me go, I should break out and do Thee all manner of evil.' (2) And this fills us with a fear of our unprofitableness. If when men have done all they are still *servi inutiles*, unprofitable servants,[7] what are we, who have done so little and neglected so much? What waste of time and grace and visitations and warnings and calls and inspirations and impulses; what squandering even of our natural powers of intellect and will and energy there is in every one; what capacities stifled, what powers lost, and what moral force wasted. If the barren fig-tree

[6] S. James iii. 6. [7] S. Luke xvii. 10.

with all its leaves was fruitless, what are we? (3) But no one can be conscious of the weakness, wilfulness, waywardness, of all creatures in the sight of their Creator without a sense of fear. We exist by a volition of God. We depend upon the continuity of that will as a ray of light depends on the sun; we live and move and are in Him by a constant support and concourse of His almighty power with the life He has given us; and yet we dare to sin against Him, to sin in Him, to forget Him, to live as if our being were our own, and as if we had native rights before Him, and even against Him. He is 'I am Who am,' and we are who are not; and yet we are proud, full of self-sufficiencies, self-consciousness, and unconsciousness that before Him we are sin and nothing.

2. And next, this consciousness awakens a great fear of sin, as it is both within us and around us. We are conscious that we are daily and often swerving from God, and moving in a deviation from our

eternal end; that we are a deformity in the presence of Him to whose image we were created; and that sin is a leprosy which corrupts the soul, and a palsy which loosens and frustrates its powers, so that we do not the good that we would. We know that unless we keep a strong hand on ourselves we decline from God; that we are like a jarred machine which cannot do its work. We never pass a day without fear lest a cloud should rise up between us and God, and often the darkness settles upon us. All this we know to be passing within us; and round about us are the world and its allurements, Satan and his angels, and the fiery darts of the evil one, which fall thick and suddenly upon us. None have more cause to fear than those who are fearless in such a world and in such a warfare, for none are more in danger than those who think they are safe. 'He that thinketh himself to stand let him take heed lest he fall.'[8]

[8] 1 Cor. x. 12.

3. Lastly, the gifts of holy fear work in us a watch and a control over ourselves. (1) First, in the use of the world—for use it we may, and till we go out of it use it we must. But we must 'use it as not abusing it,'[9] keeping ourselves 'unspotted from this world.'[10] We must use the world, its possessions, its employments, its powers, for the manifold duties we owe to ourselves, to God, and to others. And in so using it we need not love it, nor be entangled by it. We may be dead to it, and crucified to it, and it may be crucified to us,[11] so that neither its mire shall be upon our feet nor the smell of its fires upon our raiment. But for this there must be a watchful guard over the heart, and a firm control over the will. (2) This gift or fear will not only keep us from unlawful things, it will also keep us safe in all our contacts with lawful things. The two rules S. Paul has given will guide us in this most inti-

[9] 1 Cor. vii. 31.
[10] S. James i. 27.
[11] Gal. ii. 20.

mate and highest part of our spiritual life. He says, 'All things are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient;[12] that is, they will not help my salvation; they will not further my sanctification; they will not be good or safe for those about me who look to me for guidance in difficulty, and for strength in their temptations. Again he says, 'All things are lawful to me, but all things edify not.'[13] I might do this or enjoy that, but would it make me wiser, better, stronger, nearer to God, and farther from my many imperfections? I will freely forego them, lest, lawful as they are, they may be a hindrance to me. And further, even though safe for me, they may not be safe for others. And my example in using my liberty, which is safe to me, may lead others to use their liberty, which they cannot do without risk at least. (3) This fear also closes the windows and the inlets by which the world and sin gain entrance to the heart. *Mors intrat per fenestras.*[14]

[12] 1 Cor. vi. 12. [13] Ibid. 23. [14] Jer. ix. 21.

'Death is come up through our windows.' The eyes and the ears of the unwary stand open, as in a deserted house, inviting the wandering spirits of evil to enter in and dwell there. This outward guard strengthens the internal control over the perpetual acts of thought, imagination, desire, passion, will. It represses all deliberate welcome and morose dwelling on forbidden things, much more all consent and intention. It checks the first rising of intellectual and moral faults. It resists the first involuntary activities and associations of the mind and the adhesions of the will which make temptations into faults, and the suggestions of the evil one to be our own. S. Paul has taught us with the boldness of faith, which goes always with holy fear, that when we are thus assailed we may say, 'It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.'[15]

1. There is a grace of fear as well as a gift. Every supernatural motive arising

[15] Rom. vii. 17.

from the light of faith, and every fear arising from the grace of hope, has an operation of the Holy Ghost working with it and by it. This it is that shows us the fearfulness and deadliness of the mere worldly fear, because it works not conversion to God, but aversion from Him. Most men have, at some time, been assailed by this fear, and by the grace of fear they have overcome it. Next they enter into a servile fear of death, and eternity after death, which begins to restrain and to purify their life, but for a selfish end. Then they pass onward to the initial fear of sons. The servile spirit is growing less, the filial spirit growing more; but it is not yet the gift of holy fear. Nevertheless, if they are prompt in accusing themselves of sins—mortal, if they should ever be; venial, as they certainly will often be—if they come before their Divine Master in the Sacrament of Penance with their soiled face and stained hands and spotted hearts, accusing themselves honestly and humbly,

confessing also with shame their sins of omission, their want of zeal and gratitude and love, and laying open the deep of temper and pride and wilfulness that is in them,—if they will do this often in confession, daily in self-examination, then, little by little, this fear will be elevated and purified; it will become less terrible but more constraining; for as they love more they will have less cause to fear.

2. This, then, is the gift of fear, which is made perfect in eternity; for though the fear of sinning and of falling will be over, the consciousness of our own nothingness before God will be eternal; and the worship of reverence, and dependence, and submission will ascend for ever before the Throne where they cast their crowns, saying, 'Great and wonderful are Thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, O King of ages. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and magnify Thy Name? For Thou only art holy.'[16] This will be

[16] Apoc. xv. 3, 4.

the fear of filial love when all wills are one eternally with the supreme will in all its judgments. They will bless God for ever, because He has redeemed them from sin and death; and they will know the depth of the mystery of heaven, and therefore of hell; of the Beatific Vision, and therefore of the loss of God for ever.

Restrain me, O Lord, by Thy holy fear, in all my actions, words, and thoughts. Penetrate my soul with the sense of Thy sanctity, and of the sinfulness of sin, that I may never offend against Thee even by a deliberate thought. Shelter me from all approaches of evil, that I may guard my senses and keep my heart with all diligence. O God my Sanctifier, dwell in me, and cast out of me whatsoever is contrary to Thy holiness and truth, for the merits of Jesus my Lord.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

IX.

THE GIFT OF PIETY.

THE Prophet Isaias, in foretelling that the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost should rest upon the Messias or the Christ, or the Anointed, said, 'There shall come up a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a flower shall spring up from his root,'—that is, He shall be both Strength and Beauty. Out of charity spring both filial fear and filial piety.

Now piety is a certain perfection of charity. All piety is charity, but not all charity is piety. Charity in its lower degrees may exist where there is little piety; but where piety is, there charity cannot be little.

There is both natural piety and supernatural piety, and they are inseparable.

1. The piety of the order of nature is the love of parents for their offspring. Even the dumb creatures without reason have a fostering care of their young, and their

young have an instinctive drawing to their parents. In man this is a higher, nobler, more generous, and more tender affection.

2. But in the order of grace this natural piety is elevated to charity. The love of parents for their offspring is not only a tender care for their earthly welfare, but for their eternal bliss. It comprehends body and soul. There is also in their offspring a return of love, so that piety is both parental and filial.

Now this exists in its perfection in the love of the Father to His Incarnate Son, and in the love of the Sacred Heart towards His Heavenly Father. In like manner it exists between Jesus, the perfect Son, and Mary, the perfect Mother.

Piety, then, in its fullest sense, is charity with worship, thanksgiving, and praise; with reverence and loving obedience towards God,[1] and also towards all creatures in measure and in kind. It is the tenderness of charity with compassion and pity. It

[1] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 121.

was divinely perfect in the Incarnate Son, both towards His Father in heaven and towards all mankind and all the creatures of God.

Such being the nature of piety, we will see what are its objects and effects.

1. The first object of piety is the Ever-blessed Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. In our childhood we begin with the love of the Father. The love of children is our first piety. The Lord's Prayer is our first prayer. This expands, as we grow in explicit piety, to the love and adoration of the Incarnate Son and of the Holy Ghost, in love, fidelity, docility, as children, brethren, disciples.

Piety towards our Divine Saviour is threefold. (1) First, to His Person at the right hand of God, in the glory of His kingdom; to His Sacred Heart of infinite tenderness; to His five Sacred Wounds; to His most Precious Blood; (2) and secondly, to His supernatural Presence in the Sacrament of the Altar, in all the ways of wor-

ship: in the Holy Mass, in Holy Communion, in the silence of the tabernacle; and (3) in His mystical Body, which is the Church, in which He, as the Head, by influence which from Him descends into all His members, as the holy Council of Trent says, is ever with us. By His Church He ever reigns and teaches, and by His Vicar He perpetuates His authority and His pastoral care. In the mystical Body, the gift of piety adores the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier, the Spirit of truth, the Bond of its unity, the Source of its infallibility.

There is here another object of piety, which is the Word of God. The unwritten science of God, the queen of all sciences, first in the hierarchy of all truth, the divine tradition of theology, surrounds and interprets the written Word of God. The piety of the Church cherishes the Holy Scriptures as the greatest gift next after the Sacrament of the Altar. S. Paulinus of Nola in his church had two tabernacles; in the one was the Sacramental Presence of

the Word Incarnate, in the other the Written Word, inspired by the Holy Ghost. The Saints have ever loved it. To them, as to the Psalmist of old, every word of God was sweeter than the honey and the honeycomb. S. Charles read it bareheaded and upon his knees. S. Edmund of Canterbury kissed the pages before he began to read, and again when he closed the book. Such is the first object of the gift of piety.

2. The next object of piety stands all alone, unapproachable by any other creature; infinitely below God because He alone is the uncreated; immensely above all other creatures because she is the Mother of God. Next after God in our love is Mary. Being the Mother of Jesus, our Brother, she is our Mother too. 'No man,' as S. Bernard says, 'can have God for his Father who has not Mary for His Mother.' God is our Father through the incarnation of His Son. Mary is our Mother by the same divine consanguinity. The spirit of adoption, by which we cry, 'Abba, Father,' teaches us to

say, '*O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria*,' —'O merciful and loving and sweet Virgin Mary.'—'*Monstra te esse matrem*,'—'Show us a mother's love; and as thou hast all power by thy prayers over the Heart of thy Divine Son, show us also a mother's care.' Next after God she is the highest object of the gift of piety; and that for many reasons. (1) For the sake of her Divine Son. She is His Mother, the object of His perfect filial love. His example is our law. He loved her above all creatures, and we cannot be like Him if we do not love her too. To be unlike Him is to be unworthy of Him. (2) We love her also for her own sake. *a*. First because of her three sanctifications which make her the holiest of all creatures; holier than the Seraphim, and holy next after God. She is in her charity nearest to the charity of God, and therefore an object of love next after Him. *b*. We love her also for her divine maternity, for the singular and unequalled glory which God put upon her when the Holy Ghost

came upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her. *c.* And we love her lastly for her Motherhood to us. She is truly our Mother in the consanguinity of the Incarnation, and we are her sons. (3) We love her for our own sake, because of her power with God, and of her maternal piety towards us all. As the worship we pay her is infinitely less than the divine worship which is due to God only, but immensely greater than the worship we pay to all the Saints,—for the Saints are innumerable, but the Mother of God is one,—and as the throne on which she sits is lower by infinite space than the throne of God, but higher by an immensity than all the thrones in the heavenly court, so the gift of piety offers to her continually a love and adoration which is beyond all that we pay or is due to all the Saints.

3. Nevertheless they are not robbed of their honour; for next after her the Saints in light are the objects of our piety. We rejoice in their bliss and in their patronage,

and in the succession of their glad festivals, which all the year round are ever beginning, never ending. So far piety is without pity; for the Blessed and the Saints, in answer to our piety, pity and pray for us. 4. But piety has a wider range. It becomes a loving intercession for the holy souls, for those known to us and dear, for the unknown who are suffering their expiation, and for the desolate who have none to love them or to remember them before God. 5. Still further, piety takes into its charity all the disciples of Jesus, the innocent and the penitent, the preachers of His Person and of His Passion, the priests who stand at His altars, and all who suffer for His Name—the persecuted, the poor, and all the friends of God. And this is the original sense of piety, the natural love of kindred and of friends. For S. Thomas says that the object of the gift of piety is our parents and our country. Of our parents no more words are needed. To our country, call it mother country or father-

land, there is always a filial relation, and the duties of children binding us to it. All the charities of life are bound up with it. All the affections of home are sheltered in it. The very name of commonwealth suggests and even expresses the unity of lot and sympathy in which all share, if not in equal measure, nevertheless by vital participation. A filial, loving, faithful, dutiful loyalty to our people and country is called patriotism, a name debased by faction, but in itself a duty of the natural order, elevated by the gift of piety to a virtue which may be heroic in Christians and Catholics so long as they are obedient to the law of God.

Little need be said as to what destroys the gift of piety or as to what unfolds and strengthens it.

1. It is destroyed by many things, chiefly by incredulity and by immorality. (1) First, by incredulity. There was less piety in Thomas when he said, 'Non credam,'—'I will not believe;' and in the Athenians,

who set up an altar to 'the unknown god.' How should they worship what they did not love; and how should they love what they did not know? What piety can there be in a sceptic, whose love is conditional? 'I adore Thee if Thou dost exist; I love Thee if Thou are not a figment of the brain.' This levity of mind extinguishes piety even more surely than the gross faults of rude natures. It is more insolent in its recklessness, more contemptuous in its impertinence to the Maker of all things. (2) As for immorality, no words are needed. Piety springs up with holy fear, and holy fear abhors sin. When any soul is darkened by the sins which grieve the purity, truth, and charity of the Holy Ghost, His gifts languish and cease to act, and die.

2. The gift of piety is promoted by persistent care and by Christian education. On pastors and on parents rests the duty of cherishing it. Parents have the first responsibility, because they are the guardians of nurture, and they train their chil-

dren in infancy when the grace of baptism and the seven gifts are yet fresh in them. But how many who were holy in their infancy grow up without piety? How many a vocation to the priesthood is lost because neither father nor mother foster it in childhood? Sometimes they even cross and destroy the work of the Sanctifier; sometimes blindly, sometimes with their eyes open.

Love of the truth, mental prayer, and fidelity to grace will cherish and confirm the operations of piety. If we obey them they will be strengthened, and the spirit of piety will be more and more infused. It will make the service of God sweet to us. 'Blessed is he whom Thou choosest and takest unto Thee. He shall dwell in Thy courts.'[2] 'One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; that I may see the delight of the Lord, and may visit His temple,

[2] Ps. lxiv. 5.

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Bibl. Phil.
Torontonense

for He hath hidden me in His tabernacle; in the day of evils He hath protected me in the secret place of His tabernacle.'[3]

Jesus, my Kinsman, my Brother, my Friend, my Saviour, my Redeemer, my Teacher, my Master, my Lord, and my God: give me a loving heart, filial towards God and Thy blessed Mother; fraternal towards Thee and all mankind, especially to the household of faith: docile to Thy Church and to Thy word: kindly to all the works of the Sanctifier.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

X.

THE GIFT OF FORTITUDE.

FORTITUDE is the third and last gift which perfects the will. Holy fear guards us from sin and the occasion of sin, and therefore

[3] Ps. xxiv. 4, 5.

from the danger of losing God, the object of faith, hope, and love. Filial piety unites the soul with God by love, adoration, and loyalty; but without fortitude fear might become cowardice, and piety might become emotion. Fortitude is needed to give force, endurance, courage, and perseverance.

The most perfect example of this gift was in the patient endurance of our Divine Redeemer in His three-and-thirty years of mental sorrow, His agony in Gethsemani, His three hours of anguish on the Cross. The union of tenderness and of strength in the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the divine pattern of piety and fortitude.

1. Fortitude is not only a gift of the Holy Ghost, it is also a virtue of the natural order. It is the last of the four cardinal virtues;[1] and it is necessary to the perfection of the other three, that is, of prudence, justice, and temperance.

(1) For we ought, by the light of nature, to meet and to suffer any pain rather than

[1] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 123.

sin against prudence; that is, against the light of reason and of conscience when it dictates what we ought to do for our own welfare or the welfare of others.

(2) We ought also to meet and to bear any pain rather than violate the dictates of justice in our dealings with other men.

(3) We ought, in like manner, to endure any pain rather than surrender ourselves to the love of pleasure, to self-indulgence, and to the mastery of sense over reason and right.

Now it is fortitude which perfects and strengthens the will in the natural order to obey and to execute the dictates of prudence, justice, and temperance.

It is therefore a natural virtue, but it is never without a divine help of grace.

It extends its influence and action over all the duties of the law and light of nature.

And, acting by the help of grace, it sustains the operations of faith, hope, and charity in all the conflicts which arise in the way of obedience to the commandments of the divine law.

2. But the gift of fortitude is higher than this natural virtue. It is a permanent and infused habit, strengthening the soul to meet and to bear the fears and the pains which must be met and suffered in going beyond the law of simple obedience, and in fulfilling the counsels of the law of liberty.

Its effects are many.

(1) First it gives a calm courage in times of temptation. S. Paul says, 'Put you on the armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil;'[2] that is, Be armed with fortitude, the signs of which will be not a blind confidence, nor an unconsciousness of danger, but a very full sense and measure of the dangers which are around us, a fear of falling, and a sense of the power of temptation, but at the same time with a great mistrust of self, a great confidence in God, a trust that, rather than suffer us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear, He will send twelve legions of angels to keep us safe. And this confidence

[2] Ephes. vi. 11.

gives power to bear anything. Job, sitting in his desolation, tempted all round, is an example; so too the endurance of S. Paul when his prayer for deliverance had been thrice refused. The one said, 'I can do all things in Him who is within me, strengthening me;'[3] and the other, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth;'[4] as if he had said, Therefore I shall not die, nor will He forget me. Both endured to the end.

(2) We have need also of fortitude in the practice of penance, without which we shall certainly not persevere. S. Leonard of Port Maurice used to say, 'If I had one foot in heaven, and should leave off to mortify myself, I should fall, it may be for ever.' The reason why we make so little progress is because we are so cowardly and soft with ourselves. Try yourselves by a few questions. Do you fast? Do you abstain? Do you deny yourself in anything —in palate, in clothing, in comfort, in delicacy of taste and personal self-indulgence?

[3] Phil. iv. 13. [4] Job xix. 25.

Do we ever give to the poor what costs us a sacrifice? Have we ever been sensibly poorer by any alms or works of charity? And if we have not courage for single acts of self-mortification, how should we ever persevere in habitual self-denial, which becomes more austere by reason of its recurrence and continuity? We often begin, and then shrink and draw back; then begin again, but after a while grow weary and fall back once more into our old softness and self-sparing. It needed no little fortitude in the Apostle, through a long life, to chastise his body and bring it into subjection. But we know that, Apostle as he was, it was vital to his salvation, lest, after preaching the Gospel to others, he should become a cast-away.

(3) Fortitude is also needed in our warfare with the world. 'You shall be hated by all men for My Name's sake,'[5] is true of every one whose faith is a reality. If it does not offend the world, it cannot please our Divine

[5] S. Matt. x. 22.

Master. 'If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Jesus Christ.'[6] The disciple is not above his Lord. And if they called Him a friend of sinners, gluttonous, blasphemer, seditious, and mad, we shall not be spared. But the hatred of the world needs less fortitude to bear it than its fascinations, its attractions, its affection. Many who have stood out against threats and shame and false accusations have given way before the loss of home and friends and happiness. It needs much strength and endurance to give up employments and trusts and honours, and friends, to lose confidence, goodwill, respect, influence, and the affection of those by whom the more we love them the less we are loved. This needs the passive courage which makes a soldier stand under fire. It was the courage which sustained the martyrs. Though martyrdom by the scaffold or the sword be past, there are other martyrdoms to be suffered. There is the martyrdom of charity in the pestilence,

[6] Gal. i. 10.

the martyrdom of zeal in wearing out life and strength for the souls of man; there is the martyrdom of a will, prompt and ready for life or for death, in behalf of the truth and the Church. This martyrdom of will, though not in deed, which was the lot of the beloved disciple, is offered to you in these days of peace. The ages of martyrdom may pass, but the spirit of martyrs must never pass away. Into the heavenly city 'the fearful'[7] shall never enter.

If we choose God above all things, and break with the world, we shall have our share in the Cross; but we shall bless God for it in all its forms, knowing it to be the pledge of His love and care. Fortitude has three signs by which it may be known. The first is silence under pain: 'Jesus held His peace.' The second is meekness: as the sheep before the shearers is dumb so opened He not His mouth. The third is gladness under wrongs: Peter and John rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for

[7] Apoc. xxi. 8.

the Name of Christ. Every wound borne now will be glorified, every stigma will have its radiance, and every sorrow will be turned into joy, when, through the perseverance of fortitude, all who have suffered with Him shall reign with Him in His kingdom.

O God the Holy Ghost, give me light to contemplate the love and the Passion of Jesus, that I may be changed into love and patience. Take from me selfishness, softness, self-love, delicacy, cowardice, and fear; give me a spirit of endurance, a love of labour and of the Cross, of hardness and of courage, that I may be willing to spend, and to be spent, for the elect's sake.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

XI.

THE GIFT OF SCIENCE.

The gifts which perfect the reason or intelligence are four—science and counsel, intellect and wisdom. But as the subject-matter of the reason is twofold—that is, truth and falsehood, right and wrong—the operations and judgments of the reason are either speculative or practical. And they are each perfected by two of these four gifts.

The practical reason is perfected by the gifts of science and of counsel.

The gift of science or knowledge is a supernatural habit which makes us prompt to know and to practise the will of God. We will call it science to distinguish it from all other knowledge, which is of many kinds.

The first outline of the likeness of God in us is the reason or intelligence; and the reason is the light which guides the will.

Therefore the conformity of the intelligence to the intelligence of God is the first

condition of rectitude of will, or of morality. A perverted intelligence draws after it a perverted will, and therefore a false morality. And one error in principle is worse than ten errors in practice, because a false principle is continuous, and reproduces the same moral aberrations.

The mission of the Apostles was to elevate the intelligence of those in Israel who believed, and then to rectify the intelligence of the heathen. They had to encounter the Gnostics of the East—who believed themselves to possess the science of God, apart from, and in opposition to, the revelation of Jesus Christ—and next the refined sensuality of the Greeks, and lastly the coarse idolatry of the Roman world. As it was then, so it is now. The special labour of the Church at this day is to rectify the intellectual aberrations of the last three hundred years. The chief characteristic of the nineteenth century is not so much heresy as intellectual self-sufficiency; and yet it is not the self-sufficiency of the first Gnostics, who believed themselves to

have the knowledge of God, but the self-sufficiency of those who believe that they know that God is not to be known. Nevertheless, in teaching that nobody can know God, they profess to know not only that God does not exist: but also that there is no immutable right and wrong and no eternal moral law. If the legislator cannot be known, then certainly the law cannot. The whole moral world then falls back into chaos; the earth is without form and void, and darkness rests on the face of the deep. For this there is no cure but the sanctification and rectification of the intelligence by the presence of the Illuminator, who 'enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world.'[1] Even they who afterwards, with their eyes open, return to darkness, once saw this light.

The first gift, then, which rectifies the intelligence is science. To understand it we must see what it is, what is its office or effects, and what are its objects.

1. First, as to what it is. It is a super-

[1] S. John i. 8.

natural habit or permanent quality infused into the natural intelligence, elevating it and rendering it prompt to discern the will of God chiefly in practical and moral truth.[2] It is therefore something more than prudence, natural or supernatural. It is also more than the light of faith, which is common to the just and the unjust; whereas the effects of science are in the just only. It includes both the dictates of prudence and the light of faith; and it is united with charity, so that it is a union of light with the love of truth. The want of this gift of science is the cause of all superstition and unbelief. Because men will not receive the truth in the love of it, therefore they deceive themselves, and mistake lies for truths. It is therefore an illumination of the reason with a spiritual discernment of the limits of truth and falsehood, good and evil.

2. Its office or effects upon the intelligence are chiefly these: (1) First of all to

[2] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 9.

impart an affinity between the intelligence and divine truth. The love of God is akin to the truth of God as warmth is to light. It gives to the reason an instinctive attraction to the truth, and an instinctive shrinking from falsehood. S. Paul says the 'animal man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.' This spiritual discernment is intuitive, and they that have it sometimes can render no reason for their judgments, which are unerringly true, as they are afterwards proved to be. (2) Next science conforms the intelligence to the moral perfections of God; to His truthfulness, to His purity, to His justice. It makes men outspoken and straightforward. They cannot utter half truths, or palter with truth, or soften it. And (3) it gives a facility in understanding the will of God in His dealings with us. 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter,'[3] is the way in which God leads us, step by step, trusting Him in the twilight till the light of science

[3] S. John xiii.

or spiritual discernment interprets His providence and our lot. Our Lord said, 'If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself.'[4] There is a light of discernment which comes from experience, and that experience comes by obedience to the gift of science. 'Light is risen to the just.'[5]

3. The objects of this gift are chiefly of a moral kind; that is, the law of God, and God as the Law-giver.

(1) It shows us the presence of God in all things, and all things in the presence of God. Moses saw a bush burning with the divine presence in Horeb. The gift of science sees the whole world burning with the presence of God. As we see all things in the light of the sun, and the light of the sun upon all things, so the whole creation teems with the divine presence, and reflects its glory. All things become a ladder which reaches from earth to heaven; a hierarchy

[4] S. John vii. 17. [5] Ps. xcvi. 21.

of creatures, from the lilies of the field to the splendour of the Seraphim, ascending to the throne of God: *Dominus scientiarum tu es*,—Thou art the Lord of all the manifold sciences of infinite intelligence. And in this light we understand what we owe to God, to ourselves, and to our neighbours. (2) Another object of science is the state of our own soul; the sins of commission and omission, the greater sinfulness in us of thoughts, words, and deeds, which in others would have less aggravation, because of our greater light; and therefore our special dangers and proneness to fall and instability of will.

(3) Lastly, it gives us a discernment to know how we can live in this world, but not of it. It discerns the fitness of time and place, of words and actions, in our dealings with the world, with our enemies, and with our friends. From it spring two safeguards: the one is circumspection, which shows us all that surrounds us; the other is caution, which governs us in what we say or do. The gift of science is the higher

and more perfect operation of prudence with light, discernment, and facility in discerning what is practically right and wise to do, or, in a word, it is the perfection of Christian common sense.

It is well to know what hinders and what helps the operations of the gift of science.

1. The proper opposite of science or knowledge is folly—that is, the reckless, thoughtless, superficial, unreflecting, indeliberate way of acting, speaking, and living, which, though often free from grosser sins, is nevertheless rash and dangerous. It blunts the discernment of prudence, and darkens the moral sense. And this leads on to a practical, and sometimes to a speculative, unbelief. To such minds God is nowhere. No bush burns with His presence. All nature is dead. There is a moral and an intellectual blindness which hides the light of faith and of nature from such minds. They are in the exterior darkness before the time. In such men there is also a strange levity, a want of moral

earnestness which nothing can rouse, a want of reverence which nothing can impress, a want of self-chastisement which nothing can awaken from its self-indulgence. Such minds rush into the presence of God with their heads covered and shoes on their feet. The self-sufficiency of careless minds hinders the knowledge of truth. Thinking themselves to know, they will never learn.

2. The two things which help to unfold the gift of science are prayer and reading in a book which has three chapters.

Prayer, especially mental prayer, continually obtain fresh gifts of light and knowledge. It is God's gift, and if we ask for it, we shall surely receive it. The very art of speaking with God illuminates the mind.

The book in three chapters was never written on paper with ink; but it is open and legible to all. The first chapter is God and His perfections: the glory of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; the Ever-blessed Trinity; the love and worship of the Holy Ghost, by whom we are made

the temple of God. The second chapter is Jesus: His life, His mind, and His Sacred Heart. The third chapter is ourself: our state in His sight, our relation to Him and His to us.

This is a science which never inflates the soul. It casts out all vainglory by the knowledge and vision of the glory of God. True science is always humble. It is a gift of God; and there is in the world an unbroken line of those whom God has illuminated. False science puffs up with the confidence of the blind, and the contempt of those who see. Pray, then, for a healthy intellect, and fear all novelties, holding fast by the old traditions of the faith.

Give me, O Lord, spiritual discernment, that I may know Thy will, the way of holiness, the way of humility, Thy commandments, Thy precepts, Thy counsels, the law of liberty, and the way of perfection. Give me the science of Thyself, the science of Jesus, and the science of the Saints, that I

may be able to comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth, and to know the charity of Christ, which surpasseth all science.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

XII.

THE GIFT OF COUNSEL.

The second gift that perfects the practical intellect is counsel. The gift of science rectifies and sanctifies the intellect. It rectifies it by bringing it back from the illuminism and aberrations of false science, from the criticism and vagueness of rationalism; from the atheism and immorality of modern scepticism; and it sanctifies the intellect by the light of faith, by submission to the Divine Teacher, and by conformity to the truth and to the law of God—that is, to God Himself.

But what science begins, counsel makes perfect.

What, then, is it, and what are its operations and its fruits?

1. First, as the cardinal virtue of prudence guides man in the natural order to rectitude of life and to happiness, so in the supernatural order counsel guides us to eternal life, to perfection, and to everlasting bliss.[1] It therefore includes both prudence and science. It contains in itself the knowledge of the truth and of the law of God; of the presence and will of God in all things, and of all things, so far as they are known, in Him. Counsel is defined as a habit or quality impressed upon the reason, prompting us to follow the divine suggestions, and giving to it a discernment and a readiness to obey, in choosing freely the better and higher ways of life, even though they be arduous and hard of attainment. For instance, the straiter ways of self-denial, humility, and mortification; the stricter watch

[1] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 52.

over our senses, and control of our thoughts; or the choice of a state, as the life of the priesthood in poverty, obedience, and chastity; or of a nun in the cloister; or in the life of active charity among the poor, the sick, or little children. S. Leo says, 'Nihil arduum humilibus'—'Nothing is hard to the humble.'

2. The operations and effects of counsel are complete conversion to God and aspiration after perfection.

Now there are in the lives of most men two conversions.

(1) The first is from sin to penance. For they who, without deviation or break, persevere in the even and continuous and unimpeded conversion of an innocent life of baptismal grace are few among the many who, more or less, offend but return in sorrow.

When the words, 'the wages of sin is death,'[2] strike through the ear upon the heart, the gift of counsel moves the reason and the will to refuse the service which ends

[2] Rom. vi. 23.

in death. When it hears, 'What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul?'[3] it moves us to refuse the fool's bargain; when it hears, 'No man can serve two masters,'[4] it resolves to serve one alone; when it hears, 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me,'[5] it answers, 'Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.' In all this there is a weighing, and wavering, and balancing, and a conflict of the sensitive and the superior will; the spirit of counsel persuading, and the spirit of Satan dissuading; and the will, in its weakness and its freedom, beset by desires and fears, resolving and retracting, till at last it freely chooses the way of salvation. At all costs it breaks with sin and error and the world. This is the first conversion, without which no man shall see God.

(2) The second conversion begins where this is confirmed. It carries on the work of

[3] S. Mark viii. 36.
[4] S. Matt. vi. 24.
[5] S. John xiv. 6.

counsel from penance to the way of perfection. All are called to penance and to perfection; for to be perfect does not mean to be sinless. It means to be in the love of God and our neighbour, and free at least from deliberate venial sin. It was of this S. Paul said, 'Not as though I had already attained or were already perfect; but I follow after, if I may by any means apprehend wherein I am also apprehended by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended. But one thing I do; forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forth myself to those that are before, I press towards the mark, to the prize of the high vocation of God in Christ Jesus.'[6]

And, as a means to this end, he denied his liberty. He said, 'All things are lawful unto me; but all things are not expedient,'[7] nor do they edify. 'If meat scandalise—that is, make my brother to sin—I will never eat flesh, lest I should scandalise my brother.'[8]

[6] Phil. iii. 12-14.
[7] 1 Cor. vi. 12.
[8] 1 Cor. viii. 13.

He would have said, 'If my right hand make me to offend, I will cut it off and cast it from me.'

All this is written for our instruction; and the spirit of counsel is always whispering in our hearts, and moving us to the same higher aspiration. When we are smitten on the right cheek, it says, 'Turn the other also.' When we are falsely accused, it whispers, 'Jesus held His peace.' When we are tempted to softness, it says, 'Sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come and follow Me.' When men speak well of us, it says, 'Be a fool for Christ's sake.' These, and ten thousand voices, and lights, and whispers of counsel, are always working to draw us onward and upward, nearer to God in humility and charity. In whatsoever state we are, in the world or out of it, all this interior spiritual perfection is within our reach, for the essential perfection of the soul in time and in eternity is charity. 'God is charity;

and he that abideth in charity abideth in God, and God in him.'[9]

3. The fruits of counsel are many and great. A lax life has many sorrows, but a strict life has many joys. (1) The first fruit of counsel is true peace. *Res severa verum gaudium.* True joy is a high and grave thing; it is too deep to be heard by outward ears. This peace is the peace of God, which comes from God, and is to be known only in God; and it passeth all sense, for it is spiritual, and keeps the 'heart and the mind,' the inward world of affections and of thoughts. It is an internal silence, for the clamour of passions is stilled; and the mind is recollected or gathered into itself from the dissipation and disorder which comes from a multiplicity of interests, cares, and desires.

(2) This peace in God is also a union with God—a consciousness that only God is enough for our happiness, and that God alone is enough without any other; and in

[9] 1 S. John iv. 16.

this consciousness of attainment there is great rest. *In pace in idipsum dormiam et requiescam*,—'In this peace I will sleep and take my rest.'[10] As the Psalmist says, 'He shall give sleep to His beloved.'[11] It is the nearest approach in this world to the rest when every man shall sit down under his vine and under his fig-tree in the Paradise of God.

(3) In the calmness of this quiet heart there is a clear consciousness of the presence of God, which may be called the vision of faith. 'He that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.'[12] But here it is easy to talk of what we do not understand.

1. Now there are three things that oppose and destroy the operations of the spirit of counsel.

(1) The first is the prudence of the flesh, which counsels what it calls modera-

[10] Ps. iii. 6.
[11] Ibid. cxxv. 3.
[12] S. John xiv. 21.

tion in all things — conformity to public opinion, to social customs, to the axioms of worldly wisdom. Prosperous, able, astute men are dangerous counsellors for the servants of Jesus Christ. They say to penitents and to earnest men what Peter said to his Master: 'Be it far from Thee; this shall not be unto Thee.'[13] 'Spare thyself.' There is a lax liberty of opinion and of action which lowers and slackens all high and generous aspirations, and an easy rule of leaving austerities to great sinners, and sacrifices to the days of persecution, which robs men of many graces and merits, vocations and rewards. S. Teresa says that it is a dangerous thing to be directed by worldly prudence, it kills off all high and generous aspirations; and if minds do not look upward they creep along a low plane which inclines downward; for if we do not ascend we are descending imperceptibly. There are some who, so long as they do not actually sin, think they have done enough;

[13] S. Matt. xvi. 22.

and, worst of all, they find a priest who through timidity or respect of persons, is silent when he ought to speak.

(2) Another enemy of the spirit of counsel is its direct opposite, a presumption which makes a man sluggish and immovable to the spirit of counsel. It is what S. Bernard calls the *duplex animæ lepra, proprium consilium et propria voluntas* — the twofold leprosy of the soul, self-counsel and self-will. The Wise Man says, 'Hast thou seen a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him.'[14] He will go up by his own choice, and stand on the pinnacle of his temple, as if he had wings or the command of a legion of angels to bear him up. And yet he cannot walk on the plainest path without dashing his foot against the stones. He adheres to his own judgment about all things, especially about his own state and his own character. Nobody knows him but himself; nobody understands, nobody appreciates him. 'Pride

[14] Prov. xxvi. 12.

goeth before destruction, and the spirit is lifted up before a fall.'[15]

(3) Lastly, counsel is hindered by impetuosity, not only in evil but in good. Everybody is led either by the flesh or by the spirit. That which goes before us and gets first or is uppermost in our minds, that is the leader, and we are the follower. Now if the flesh outrun the spirit in any evil thing, we see the sin at once; but we do not so easily see it when it is in things that are good; and yet how much spirituality of mind is destroyed by emotion and excitement and imagination, which are often impetuosities of sense, that is, of the flesh. So again, when passion outruns the judgment, when ambition, or covetousness, or love of honours, climbs and snatches and schemes, like Balaam, who tempted God, counsel is baffled and destroyed. Sometimes zeal and haste and precipitation of mind hinder deliberation even in doing good. Men undertake what they have no strength to do, or

[15] Prov. xvi. 18.

they begin too soon, or they mistake the means, and because they fail they throw up their work. Satan, who could not hinder their beginning, wrecks the whole by driving them on to what is imprudent or impossible. This applies to mortifications, penances, rash resolutions, imprudent vows, excessive devotions, in number or in kind, and the like. The reaction carries many back from an overstrained beginning into an excess of laxity. They set out to be saints without counsel, and they end in giving up even the common practices of piety.

2. There are also three things which help the spirit of counsel. (1) The first is self-mistrust, which opens the ears and the heart to the voice of the Church, of the Holy Spirit, of our spiritual guide, and of the wise. (2) The next is a will detached from choices and likings, indifferent to all things so long as they help us onward and upward to God. (3) The third and last is singleness of heart. 'The light of the body

is thy eye. If thy eye be single, thy whole body shall be lightsome.'[16]

'Blessed are the clean in heart, for they shall see God;'[17] that is, when the heart is clean from impurity and from duplicity it is calm, serene, and clear; and in the light of a transparent conscience, the way of counsel and of perfection, and the will of God about us in our lot and state, are visible without shadow of uncertainty or doubt.

Thou hast shown me Thy light and Thy truth, and they have led me into Thy holy hill and into Thy sanctuary. Lead me upward, O my Lord, nearer and nearer into the light of Thy Presence, that I may know myself and my state and my lot and Thy holy will in all things that concern me. Keep me from seeking the things that are my own, that in all my life and will I may seek Thee, and all that binds me, and conforms me more and more closely to Thee. All things are lawful to me, but not all

[16] S. Matt. vi. 22. [17] Ibid. v. 8.

things will make me like to Thee in Thy humility.

Jesus, have mercy upon me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

XIII.

THE GIFT OF INTELLECT.

THERE now remain to be examined the two gifts which perfect the speculative reason or intelligence, namely, intellect and wisdom. For clearness and precision it will be better to use the name of intellect rather than understanding to express this gift. It may be defined as a supernatural and active habit impressed upon the reason, and giving to it a perspicuity and a precision in apprehending and comprehending the truths of faith, with their principles and motives of credibility.

The natural faculty of intellect is the power by which we are able to apprehend and to comprehend natural truths. Philo-

sophy is the highest exercise of the natural intellect because it knows truths and things in their causes and first principles. It is as the eye of the soul. As the eye is to things of sense, so is the intellect to ideas or objects of the invisible or supersensible world. It has a world of its own, wider and deeper and higher than the world of sense; for instance, God, self, and morals are objects of the natural intellect.

The supernatural gift of intellect is a faculty superadded to nature, and related to the spiritual world, by which things of the spirit, the internal acts and facts of our spiritual life, the full and inner meaning of the truths of faith, of theology, and of Scripture are discerned and understood.[1]

Now the operations of this gift are chiefly as follows:

1. It enables us to understand what we believe. It makes explicit what was implicit; and it gives a clear perception of the

[1] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 8.

meaning, with the reasons and motives why we believe it.

For instance, those who come to faith in adult life, with mature reason, need first to know the preambles of faith or the motives of credibility on which they believe, and submit their intellect to 'the obedience of faith.'[2] They who are baptised in infancy receive the infused habit of faith before they know the preambles; for them the preambles are not necessary. The millions of the Christian world have never known them: the children, the unlettered, the poor, could never explicitly know them. They live and die, sanctified and made perfect in the truths of God by faith. Nevertheless, even for such as have received infused faith from infancy, it is good; and often it is a duty to know with clearness as well the reasons and motives of credibility as also the full meaning of the dogmas of faith.

(1) But in their case faith precedes reason. It is on the condition of believing first that

[2] Rom. xvi. 26.

the gift of intellect illuminates them afterwards. 'Believe, and you shall understand.' 'Unless you believe, you shall not understand.'[3]

(2) And yet faith is not a blind act, but the implicit act of the natural intellect; and intellect accompanies faith through all its processes and operations. It apprehends, step by step and truth by truth, what faith believes, and what it believes it appreciates.

(3) This is the difference between the legitimate and the illegitimate use of reason. Reason illuminated by faith is made perfect. Reason testing, measuring, criticising, limiting faith is rationalism, which inverts the divine order, and not only destroys faith, but dwarfs reason also.

S. Augustine says, 'Far be it from us to believe without having a reason and without inquiry; for we could not even believe at all if we had not rational souls.'[4] Again

[3] S. Aug. in Evang. S. Jcan. *Opp.* tom. iii. p. 504.

[4] S. Aug. Epist. cxx. 3, *Opp.* tom. ii. p. 347.

we say, 'But first we must bow our necks to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, that by faith we may each of us come to understand.'[5]

S. Anselm: 'As the right order requires that we first believe the deep things of the Christian faith before we presume to discuss them by reason, so it seems to me to be neglect if, after we are confirmed in faith, we do not study to understand what we believe.'[6]

2. The gift of intellect is the power by which the Church defends and propagates the faith. It is the supernatural light by which, as witness, teacher, and judge, it prevails over the intellectual perversity and antagonism of the world, and that especially in three ways.

(1) First, in giving evidence. The Church, as S. Augustine says, 'Securus

[5] De Peccatorum Meritis, c. xxi. 16, tom. x. p. 16.

[6] Cur Deus Homo, lib. i. c. ii., and S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 2.

judicat orbis terrarum.' It sits calmly in the See of truth, with a luminous universality and unity of faith confounding the multitudinous contradictions of error. It is a witness visible to the eye, audible to the ear, authoritative to the intelligence, and, as the Vatican Council says, 'the irrefragable proof of its own divine legation.'[7] As the true key alone fits and turns in the wards, so the faith alone can open the heart in man, and meet the needs of life and the fears of death. It understands man, and they who believe understand the Church. They know its voice by the answer in their own heart.

(2) It also unravels objections drawn from inspired and uninspired history, from Holy Scripture, from the Fathers, and from heretics: as in the Harmony of the Gospels, it solves the verbal differences, the apparent contradictions of the sacred narratives, the seeming oppositions, such as those about faith and works and the like; and still more the

[7] First Constitution on Catholic Faith, ch. iii.

controversies of word-splitters, who say that 'This is My body,' no more means that it is His body than I am the way, the door, the vine, means that He is these things. It is of this mental obscurity S. Paul says, 'The letter killeth, the Spirit quickeneth;'[8] and S. Jude, speaking of those who err from the faith, 'These are they that separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.'[9]

3. By this gift also the Catholic Church has elaborated its science of faith. Theology, though it is not a science in the strict propriety of the term, because it does not resolve itself into principles which are self-evident, is nevertheless the highest of sciences in a true sense because all its truths descend from God and rest upon His veracity. Given His revelation, theology becomes infallible in its certainty and scientific in its form. From the beginning the Church has defined its doctrines partly and chiefly for the clear and compendious instruction of its own members, and partly also in conflict

[8] 1 Cor. iii. 6. [9] v. 19.

with the world outside of faith. It has chosen and fixed the very words and phrases and formulas by which truth, like the coinage of gold, bears the image of God and the superscription of its own authority. Such are the sacred words Trinity, Substance, Person, Consubstantial, Transubstantiation, Immaculate Conception, Infallibility. And as the divine truth has expanded itself into definition by the action of Councils, so has the divine law unfolded itself into the wonderful legislation of Pontiffs and Councils, that is, into the pontifical or canon law; and upon both of these the sanctified intellect of the Church, ever working in its Schools, has wrought out and built up the greatest intellectual structure the world has ever seen, namely, dogmatic and moral theology and the science of faith and morals in its unity, harmony, and procession of truth from truth.

For thus the gift of intellect adjusts this immutable truth to the ever-changing conditions of men and of the world, as, for in-

stance, in public life, in the science of politics, of authority and obedience, in physical science, in social laws such as usury, in the lawfulness of wars, and the like. So in private life it is this gift which protects piety from the illusions of visionaries and fanatics, and from the spirit of singularity and false conscience, by which religion is often made not only ridiculous, but hurtful to souls and to households. It gives a Christian common sense, which is the salt of devotion. If this lose its savour, devotion often becomes Pharisaic and intolerable.

There is, as there must be, an absolute harmony between divine and human science, for, as the Councils of the Lateran and the Vatican have defined, 'truth cannot contradict truth.'[10] Yet for a time they may seem to do so; as, for instance, astronomy and geology have been supposed to be at variance with revelation; and yet no fact as yet has been proved which is at variance with any definition of the Church. No interpretation

[10] First Constitution on Catholic Faith, c. iv.

of Holy Scripture except that of the Church constitutes doctrine of faith. No part of Holy Scripture has ever been interpreted by the Church against which human science can array itself. Apparent difficulties are only appearances, not proofs, and one by one they have vanished. So with history. The world professes to know the history of the Church better than the Church itself. But the Church not only knows its own history by unbroken consciousness of its own personal identity; it is its own history, for its past is present in its lineal intelligence; for in the mind of the Church there is not a memory of things gone by, but a living knowledge of what was and is in its divine tradition. So again with progress and civilisation, and the gospel of 'modern thought.' The Church contains in itself the civilisation which has created the Christian world, the moral forces which have disposed and sanctified the material order of human society. It has in itself the highest ethics, the highest politics, and therefore

the highest civilisation; and these alone are the motive powers of progress. The undoing and pulling down of the unity of nations, of faith, of morals, of religion, and of civil life is not progress, it is retrogression. It is a relapse, the end of which is disorder, overthrow, stagnation. So long as lawgivers and statesmen were in the unity of the Christian order, the gift of intellect taught them that conformity to the truth and law of God is the first and only principle of civilisation, progress, and stability to commonwealths. When they threw off the light obedience of faith to God in His Church they departed into the ways of political and social disorder, which has bred a century of revolutions, wars, and intolerable misery to the world. They have forfeited the Christian common sense which the gift of intellect once bestowed upon their fathers, and the nations they have misled are heaping up their own chastisement.

4. It is this gift which has formed the households and schools of the Church. It

has taught Christian parents to count the faith and morals of their children better, not only than literature and culture, but more precious than life itself. It has formed the teachers of the faithful, giving to each his own office and character as to the four chief doctors of the Church—S. Jerome, the literal interpreter of Holy Writ; S. Ambrose, the allegorical; S. Augustine, the doctor of grace and of unity; S. Gregory, the moral teacher and lawgiver, and pastor of pastors. So again of the theologians, as S. Anselm and S. Thomas, the dogmatic teachers, and all their followers, who have wrought up the materials, which others laid together, in scientific order.

5. It is this also that teaches us the one true method of forming man for his own welfare and the good of others. This can only be done by the rectification and sanctification of the intellect; but rectified it cannot be unless it be sanctified; and as the intellect leads or misleads the will, and as the man is what his will becomes—holy or

unholy, upright or crooked, true or false, kindly or malicious—so the illumination and sanctification of the intellect is the only method and way to the welfare of men and of nations. Therefore the Church founded its seminaries, schools, universities, upon the divine tradition of faith, binding together the culture of the intellect with the discipline of the will, forming the whole man by the Word of God and the grace of the Sanctifier. It has been reserved for the sensuality and the stupidity of revolutions and of men who have lost the light of God to call instruction education, and to seek for intellectual elevation without God, the Father of Lights. From this come the intellectual aberrations of the nineteenth century. No power of man can control or bring them back. The power of God seems to be held for a time in suspense, that they may finish their course like the rotation of storms, till the pride of men is brought down by the wreck of their ambitions, and by the scourging of their impieties.

There are three things which will keep us from sharing in these sins and chastisements: (1) mental prayer; (2) study of the Holy Scripture; (3) devotion to the Holy Ghost.

Lord Jesus, let me never lose the love of Thy truth, lest I should believe a lie. Let me never trust in my own intellect, but in the Light of the Holy Ghost, who guides the Church and conforms all who are sanctified to its illumination. Let me never depart a hair's breadth from the mind of the Church or of its Head.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

XIV.

THE GIFT OF WISDOM.

THE gift of wisdom perfects the reason with its final and highest maturity. It is the last and the highest of the seven gifts.

Holy fear is the first, the root of all: 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;'[1] and 'humility goeth before glory.'[2] Holy fear, then, is the root, and wisdom is the blossom and the fruit and the crown. Wisdom is the Name and Essence of God. The uncreated wisdom of God was incarnate in Jesus Christ; and it is incorporated in His mystical Body, which is the Church. Wisdom, then, in God is Himself. In us it is a supernatural habit infused into our reason, whereby we discern and judge rightly concerning God and divine things by a light in which we see them, and by a taste by which we know them.[3] Wisdom is therefore both contemplative and practical; it sums up and contains in itself all the perfections of the intellect; and it is inseparably united to charity, by which it tastes the sweetness of God, both in His mind and in His will. It has therefore a foretaste both of vision and fruition. After this sight and

[1] Prov. i. 7. [2] Ibid. xv. 33.

[3] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 45.

taste of wisdom, nothing remains but the light of glory, and the eternal union of the soul with God.

This wisdom, then, is a gift, so that all may have it—old and young, learned and unlettered, the simple and the poor, especially they who are 'poor in spirit' and 'clean of heart.' But none can have it unless they be in charity and sanctifying grace; for they only are in union with God.

1. Wisdom is the sum of the seven gifts. It contains the perfection of the reason and of the will, therefore of the whole soul. All the seven gifts co-operate together. They act simultaneously but unequally on the reason and on the will, and they increase in their efficacy as they are mutually strengthened. Piety and fortitude act and react upon each other; piety inspiring fortitude to suffer, and fortitude sustaining piety in its self-oblation. Science gives to counsel the matter of its deliberation, and counsel elevates science to the higher ways of obedience and of patience. Intellect gathers for wisdom the divine truths

and mysteries, which wisdom reads in a higher light, and knows by a spiritual sense. 'Taste, and see that the Lord is sweet,'[4] is wisdom crying to the wise. For no other can so speak, and none but the wise have ears to hear; and these gifts mutually perfect each other. Counsel acts upon holy fear to reveal the temptations and occasions which surround us, and the way of escape. Piety acts upon intellect to sanctify it, and to inspire it with the obedience of faith. Wisdom acts upon fortitude to sustain it with the light and sweetness of the vision of God. Intellect acts upon piety to restrain it from fanaticism and superstition. This reciprocal action is always eliciting, confirming, and perfecting these seven supernatural habits, interweaving them with each other in the texture of the raiment of the Saints. But though they act simultaneously and reciprocally, they do not always act equally; and in the characters of the disciples of our Lord there are similitudes and diversities as there

[4] Ps. xxxiii. 9.

are in the countenances of brethren in the same family. They are all alike, and yet all unlike, with a diversity which is perceptible and yet is less than their mutual resemblance. For instance, some are made perfect in the will, like S. Peter, by fortitude and piety; and some in the intellect, like S. Paul, by science and counsel: yet both were perfect in sanctity. The perfection of the will makes Saints like S. Francis of Assisi, S. Francis of Sales, S. Vincent of Paul. The perfection of the reason makes Doctors like S. Athanasius, S. Thomas, S. Bonaventure. In some one gift is more prominent than another; but all are in harmony, and none are lacking. But over all this manifold sanctification of the reason and the will, reason presides and reigns supreme.

2. Wisdom therefore perfects the whole soul. It perfects all its natural functions and operations. By illumination it rectifies the reason, and conforms it to God and His truth. By fortitude it perfects the will in self-control and mortification. It guides

both the reason and the will in the subjugation and reformation of the passions of anger, sorrow, joy, zeal, and the like. And it perfects also the supernatural graces and virtues. It illuminates faith with the understanding of what it believes on the veracity of God. It perfects hope by the experience of divine sweetness, raising it to confidence: it also perfects charity in its order, and measure, and manner, and motive. It also unites both reason and will with God; for wisdom and charity are a participation of the Divine Nature. From this union come recollection, forgetfulness of self, and the habitual prayer or converse of the soul with God, and the light which shows us His will all the day long. S. John says, 'You have an unction from the Holy One, and you know all things,' and 'you have no need that any man teach you.'[5] This is true of all on whom the Holy Ghost rests with His seven gifts. Even in a common homely life there are those whom wisdom has made to be the

[5] 1 S. John ii. 20, 27

friends of God. Wheresoever they be, the poor mother toiling in her home, the carpenter among his tools, S. Philip in the confessional, S. Charles in the plague-stricken homes of Milan—they are all in the folds of the Divine Presence, in the light and the sweetness of His eternal kingdom.

3. For wisdom is the earnest of our inheritance,[6] the seal of the Holy Ghost,[7] and the pledge of His presence in our hearts. It consists, as we have seen, in a light and a taste of divine things.

This light is a foresight of the eternal light. S. Paul says, 'With open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.'[8] There is now the vision of faith, which transforms the soul into the likeness of God. 'We see now through a glass, darkly, but then face to face.'[9] It is the

[6] Eph. i. 13, 14.
[7] Ibid. iv. 30.
[8] 2 Cor. iii. 18.
[9] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

beginning of the vision of God in eternity. If we live and die in this light, then in His light 'we shall see Him as He is.'[10] It is as the morning light to the full noontide.

It has also a foretaste of the sweetness of God, and that by a certain assimilation, whereby the soul, being conformed to the mind and will of God, partakes of 'the divine nature'[11] by an affinity of spiritual discernment and love.

1. Wisdom is the reward and inheritance of the humble. To a proud soul it is impossible to be wise. In Jesus, poor in spirit, were 'hid all the treasures of wisdom.'[12] He is the wisdom of the Father. Mary, Mother of God, perfect in humility, is the 'seat of wisdom.' The Saints are rays and reflections of the Incarnate Wisdom. 'The poor in this world, rich in faith,'[13] are rich in wisdom. Little children, in their innocence, which is akin to the sanctity of God, are wiser 'than all

[10] 1 S. John iii. 2.
[11] 2 S. Peter i. 4.
[12] Col. ii. 3.
[13] S. James ii. 5.

their teachers,' and have 'understanding above their elders.'[14]

2. But the wisdom of God is foolishness with men. They cannot see its light nor taste its sweetness; therefore they will not believe in it. It is the fool's wisdom to love anything more than God or below God or out of God.

The world has a wisdom of its own, by which it lost the knowledge and love of God; and that wisdom is threefold. It is earthly, or the love of riches, happiness, honour. It is animal and without spiritual sense. It is diabolical by pride, jealousy, and sloth. Against this threefold enemy we have also a threefold security. First, by detachment from the world, from friends, from ourselves; secondly, by attachment to God and His kingdom; lastly, by love of the Cross. He is truly wise who can say, 'God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I to the

[14] Ps. cxviii. 98, 99.

world.'[15] 'With Christ I am nailed to the Cross; and I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me. And that I live now in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself for me.'[16]

O my Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to Thy promise, didst send unto us the Paraclete, the Spirit of truth and of wisdom, send down upon me the gift of wisdom out of Thy holy heaven, and from the throne of Thy Majesty; that it may be ever with me, and may labour with me, that I may always know what is acceptable to Thee. Give me the light to see, and the love to taste, the multitude of Thy sweetness, which Thou hast hid for them that fear Thee; and lest I should be deceived by the illusions of the enemy, make me to love the Cross, and willingly to bear it day by day.

Jesus, have mercy upon me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

[15] Gal. vi. 14. [16] Ibid. ii. 19, 20.

XV.

THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY GHOST.

THE sanctification of the soul is a progressive work, springing as a tree from a root, rising into a stem and spreading into branches, on which grow twelve fruits. These are mature acts, inspired by the Holy Ghost, and therefore done in and by the power of sanctifying grace. S. Ambrose says that virtuous acts are called fruits, because they refresh the doers of them with a pure delight.

Our Lord has said, 'I am the Vine, ye are the branches.' He is the root on which we are grafted. The stem of the vine is the life of solid steadfast faith, guided and guarded and made perfect by the manifold working of the seven gifts, and bearing twelve fruits.

'A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruits, neither can an evil tree bring forth good fruits. . . By their fruits ye shall know them.'[1]

[1] S. Matt. vii. 18, 20.

Now these fruits are distinct from the virtues of faith, hope, and charity, inasmuch as they are acts; and again from the gifts, inasmuch as they result from them. They are the product both of the virtues and of the gifts, as the fruits on a tree are the product and result of the life and sap and structure of the tree.

They may be therefore defined as certain active perfections of the soul; and they have many qualities, such as abundance, variety, facility, sweetness, and perfection.[2]

1. They are abundant because they grow upon and clothe the relations of the soul with God, with others, and with ourselves with manifold excellences of action and of motives. S. Paul counts up twelve distinct fruits of the Holy Ghost.[3] And S. John describes 'the tree of life, bearing twelve fruits, yielding its fruits every month,'[4] which is a vision of the fruitfulness of the Church, and of every soul in sanctifying

[2] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 1. 2, q. 70.

[3] Gal. v. 22, 23. [4] Apoc. xxii. 2.

grace. The productive principle of all these gifts is charity, which is the motive and the measure and the maturity of all actions acceptable to God.

Now these twelve fruits may be distinguished into three classes, not that they are separate, or that they do not interchange their relations; but in the main they may be regarded as follows:

(1) There are three that have their relation chiefly towards God, namely, *a.* first, charity, by which we are united and conformed to Him. It is charity towards God that kindles in us a zeal for His Name and His service. *b.* And next joy, which if it be not in God is false and deluding. *c.* And thirdly, peace. There is no peace unless it begins in God, and rests in God. Therefore S. Paul prays, 'The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.'[5] Joy is full of thankfulness, springing from a consciousness of God's love and presence; and peace is the sense of His forgiveness,

[5] Rom. xv. 13.

and of our own inward quiet of heart, free from the disturbance of desires, of dependence on creatures, and of murmuring against our lot.

(2) The next six relate to our neighbour. *a.* Patience with his faults; *b.* benignity towards his weakness; *c.* goodness in act towards those who need; *d.* longanimity in bearing with provocations and disappointments; *e.* mildness when offended; *f.* and faith or fidelity in all our promises, engagements, and duties to others.

(3) Finally, there are three that are related to ourselves. *a.* Modesty, which includes custody of the senses, delicacy of heart, and moderation in all lawful things; *b.* continence, which controls passion, temper, desire, and love of pleasure; *c.* and chastity, in thought, word, and deed.

Wheresoever sanctifying grace is in the soul, the germs of all these are. Some may be more visible and more mature; but none will be absent. They clothe the soul in all its relations and aspects with the armour of

God over the white raiment of innocence, penance, and sanctity.

The Psalmist says that the just man is like the tree planted by the river of water, which brings forth its fruit in due season: its leaf shall not wither.[6] That is, the spiritual life of the Church is inexhaustible, ever fresh and green. The inventiveness of charity is boundless. Mankind stood bare and dry as a tree blighted and dead, when all around it a new and exuberant life broke up about its roots. When the disciples had all things common they needed a sacred order of deacons to distribute their manifold charity. So in all the Church, and in all its ages, the sick and the dying, the widows and orphans, the innocent who are in peril, the penitent who are outcast, the poor who cannot help themselves, have called out into exercise the manifold inventiveness and the fruitful ministries of charity.

2. Another quality of these fruits, as

[6] Ps. i.

S. Ambrose says, is sweetness to those who do them. They are more than their own reward. They bring with them an appreciation of God, as the reward of everything done in charity; a consciousness of the love of the Sacred Heart and of His generosity to us, and also a sensible love of our neighbour, which grows as we serve him, or deny ourselves for his sake. And this inward sweetness grows not so much by acquisition as by infusion. It is a gift and a reward from God: 'Thou hast prevented him,' that is, before he sought Thee, 'with the benedictions of sweetness.'[7] And as the growth and ripening of fruits in summer and in autumn are gradual and silent, so in the spiritual life. Whatsoever we do willingly we do with facility, and whatsoever we do with facility we do with sweetness. At first many things are hard to learn, but when mastered they are easy. The crossing of our own will, the giving up of cherished desires, the choosing of a hard

[7] Ps. xx. 4.

lot in life—such as poverty, labour, solitude, mortification of the temper, the mind, and the will,—all these are hard at first; but when we learn to do them for God, and can daily say, 'Lord, I do this for Thee,' they become easier, and a sweetness is shed upon them by an unseen hand. We may then begin to understand the words, 'How great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, which Thou hast hid from them that fear Thee.'[8]

3. Lastly, these twelve fruits give a completeness to the spiritual life. S. Paul says that 'charity is the bond of perfection.'[9] It is as a girdle that gathers in and binds all our spiritual life together. The whole range of our thoughts is ordered by it; even our first thoughts of others, and of their actions, and of their characters, will be charitable. It will only be upon deliberation and proof and necessity that we shall see and find fault with them. When the heart is united with God all its first acts are benign. A heart full of charity makes a head

[8] Ps. xxx. 20. [9] Col. iii. 14.

full of just interpretations and of kindly judgments; and if our thoughts, which are to so great an extent spontaneous and indeliberate, are charitable, much more will our deliberate thoughts be restrained by charity; and if charity governs our motives, it will also prompt our desires. Every inward act of faith, hope, charity, is a work of the Holy Ghost. Though it may never be put into effect, it is accepted before God. The daily desire that His Name may be hallowed by us, and in us, and by all men; that His kingdom may come and may reign in all hearts; that His will may be done by men as by the Angels; the zeal for His house, for His Priesthood, for the souls redeemed in the most Precious Blood; the will to spend and to be spent for the elects' sake;—all these are fruits of the Holy Ghost, sweet and precious, and the pledges of an eternal reward.

There are two thoughts which follow from what has been said.

1. The first thought is one of fear: how

sinful it is to bear no fruit, to be as the barren fig-tree.

After all that God has done for us He has just rights to look for fruits in us. He washed us from original sin in baptism, and He may strictly require of us the fruits of innocence: or if we fail of this, then the fruits of penance, and through penance the fruits of justice and thankfulness and generosity and filial love.

And if, when He comes to search among the leaves and the show of our outward life, He find no fruit, or only a few fruits here and there, and those tasteless and unripe, or wild and bitter, after all His husbandry and all His patience, how great and how just is His disappointment; and how great, too, our ingratitude and our sin. If, after so many graces, and absolutions, and Communions, and inspirations, and impulses, and warnings, and chastisements; if, after so many merciful visitations, in which the pruning-knife has been busy to make us fruitful, and the intercession, 'Let it alone

this year also,' has gone up and gained for us a time of conversion to God; if, after all this, we be found still barren, how just the sentence, 'Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?'

2. The other thought is one of joy: how great the reward of the fruitful.

Even in this life God will multiply the charity, joy, and peace which flow from Him as light and sweetness into the least and the humblest who serve Him faithfully. They have been 'sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise.'[10] The indelible spiritual characters of the sons of God, of the good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and of the priests of eternal propitiation, have been impressed upon them; and 'God knoweth those that are His, having this seal.'[11]

He will keep them to the end, and even in this life shelter them in the secret of His presence; and in the life to come the measure of their reward shall be as the measure of their charity and the abundance of the

[10] Eph. . 13. [11] 2 Tim. ii. 19.

fruits they bore in His service. 'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of my God.'[12]

But these fruits are chiefly measured, not by quantity but by quality. Knowledge, eloquence, prophecies, alms, miracles, martyrdoms, without charity, are nothing before God. A cup of cold water, a mite, a kind word, a desire for His glory, though, through want of power, never accomplished,—these are as the fine gold tried in the fire, in His sight.

And yet all this is but the active perfection of the soul. There is still to come a passive perfection, which is, like the divine perfection upon Calvary, higher and more precious before God.

O my Lord Jesus Christ, who in Thy most Precious Blood hast purchased for me the fruits of the Holy Ghost, suffer me not to defraud Thy Holy Passion of its fruit in me.

[12] Apoc. ii. 7

Let me never be smitten with barrenness by Thy most just sentence. Let me never be cut down for cumbering the ground; but, if need be, let the sharp knife of Thy loving care prune and take away all that hinders my sanctification. Make the fruits of justice to grow in me, that to Thee, my neighbour, and myself I may be fruitful in every good word and work. God the Holy Ghost, sanctify me.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

XVI.

THE BEATITUDES.

The fruits of the Holy Ghost grow upon the soul as upon a tree in its maturity. They are both internal and external acts of the love of God and our neighbour. They are abundant, various, and full of sweetness. They constitute the active perfection of the soul; for charity is the bond of perfection,

after the example of our Divine Lord, who 'went about doing good.'[1] But His perfection was not alone nor chiefly in His active works, but in His Divine Passion. Obedience is made perfect in suffering. On the Cross, His heart and mind and will were conformed to God in the last perfection of patience and self-oblation.

There remains, therefore, still the perfection of patience, that is, of obedience in suffering. The active perfection is the perfection of the fruits of the Holy Ghost; the passive is the perfection of the beatitudes.

S. Augustine and S. Ambrose teach that the beatitudes are related to the virtues and gifts of the Holy Ghost as acts are related to habits. They spring, as S. Augustine says, in an especial way from the seven gifts which perfect the soul, and are therefore perfections of the spiritual life in a more eminent and heroic degree.[2]

They are called beatitudes because they

[1] Acts x. 38.

[2] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 1. 2, q. 69.

unite the soul with God in a closer and more intimate conformity, by which, even in this life, we may taste, in kind at least, the beatitude of union with God, which is eternal bliss.

The beatitudes are eight in number. They describe eight kinds of perfection, by which the soul tastes of eternal sweetness. They are (1) poverty of spirit, (2) meekness, (3) holy sorrow, (4) hunger and thirst for God, (5) mercifulness, (6) cleanness of heart, (7) peacemaking, (8) and patience under persecution.

They are acts of the same kind as may be done every day, but in such a degree and ripeness as to mark the character of those who do them with a special characteristic perfection. They are therefore the last and perfecting operations of the Holy Ghost.

1. What, then, is perfection? 2. Who are called to it? 3. What are the means of attaining it?

1. First, as to what perfection is. It has two degrees. 'The spirits of just men made

perfect'[3] in heaven are sinless. But to be perfect in this world does not mean to be without sin. In the Sacrament of Confirmation we are said to be made 'perfect Christians.' S. Paul says to the Corinthians, 'For the rest, brethren, rejoice; be perfect.'[4] S. James says, 'If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.'[5]

Perfection consists in charity; for charity is the perfection of God, and is therefore the perfection of man. Charity unites man with God, and by it God dwells in us; it perfects faith and hope, and therefore it perfects the whole soul. It is perfection, both in this life and the next; and it is the essential and personal perfection of the soul as distinct from the instrumental perfection or the state, or means whereby it may be attained.

Now this perfection consists in the reign of the love of God in the soul, prompting

[3] Heb. xii. 23.
[4] 2 Cor. xiii. 11.
[5] S. James iii. 2

and strengthening us to fulfil the obligations of sons of God. Charity reigns by obedience to the operation of the Holy Ghost; that is, to the virtues and gifts which bear the fruits and the beatitudes. And yet this does not mean that we shall be sinless in this life. It does not exclude all venial sins, for these may be still committed by those who are both just and holy, through sudden and strong temptation, impetuosity, weakness, or precipitation; nor does it exclude temptation, either from without or from within, nor the rising of passion and the disturbance or disorder of inward movements. For these things are often, and may be for the most part, indeliberate. They rise before the will can act; and it is the will only that converts temptation into personal sin. But though perfection does not exclude these indeliberate movements, it does exclude deliberate affection to such things; and when they are committed, it prompts at once to sorrow, self-accusation, and mortification.

When the love of God reigns in the soul, it has two extensions. It reaches first to persons, that is, to God, to our neighbour, to our friends, and to our enemies; and next to acts, that is, to commandments and precepts and counsels, and to the motives and inspirations of the law of liberty.

S. Paul describes this perfection of charity in its passive perfection. 'Charity is patient, is kind; charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely, is not puffed up, is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.'[6]

This is a delineation of the life of beatitudes. It shows us an inward region of passive perfection; a higher circle of the path which winds up the mountain near to its summit, at a height where clouds and storms begin to meet, and the darkness of Calvary is not far off. The light of spiri-

[6] 1 Cor. xiii. 4-7.

tual childhood is over, and the warfare of manhood is all around; but, more than this, there is a time and a region where there is darkness and dryness of heart. The sun has gone in, and God seems nowhere; crosses come one after another, some from bad men, many from good men; all things seem shaken; good seems to fail, evil to prosper. This is a realm through which Jesus went from Gethsemani to Pilate, and from Pilate to Calvary. Let us read the beatitudes again. Blessed are the poor in spirit; blessed are they that mourn; blessed are they that are persecuted for justice' sake. This is a region not so much of active charity as of obedience made perfect in suffering. But they that have ears to hear will hear a voice saying to them, 'What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter.'[7]

2. Who, then, are called to perfection? (1) All are called to be perfect, for all are called to salvation. All must be made per-

[7] S. John xiii. 7.

fect before they can see the Face of God. But not all are called to the same kind, nor to the same degree, nor in the same way. There are many vocations higher and lower, but all are to the same end, and all are called by the same Spirit. All are called, but not all to the same level, or office, or grace, or reward. No one is left all the day idle; and all shall receive their wages when the evening is come. God is sovereign, and grace is His free gift. Nevertheless all are called to perfection.

Three things are certain: first, *a.* all who are born again by water and the Holy Ghost are regenerate that they may be conformed to the image of His Son, and that is perfection. He always gives to every one an abundance of grace: we are not stinted in Him, but in ourselves. Next, *b.* it is our fault that we correspond with only a few graces out of many. And thirdly, *c.* we all might attain to a greater perfection than we do.

(2) But some are called not only to the

attainment, but to the exercise and diffusion of perfection here and now. Our Lord called His Apostles to be 'the light of the world' and 'the salt of the earth'—that is, not only to be perfect, but to make other men perfect. He perfected them by His word and life and power, and sent them to exercise the power of perfection upon mankind. The Apostolate was created to embody and to guard and to transmit the perfection of their Divine Master. It was the state of perfection, and in it was contained the Episcopate, which is the state of perfection instituted by our Lord Himself. Priests share in His sacerdotal and pastoral office, in the twofold jurisdiction over His natural and His mystical Body. They consecrate His Body and Blood; they judge and absolve men; they are His witnesses; they represent Him; they are bound to be like Him in His perfection, and to have interior spiritual perfection before they are ordained; and they are ordained to perfect other men. Therefore every Saint of the Church has

spoken with holy fear of the office of a priest. 'They ought to have a mind purer than the rays of the sun,'[8] and 'a hand purer than its light.' Priests are called 'the holier members of the body,'[9] 'the saviours of the world,' 'the kinsmen of Christ,' 'the gates of the Eternal City, through whom all who believe in Christ enter into Christ,' 'fellow-helpers of God,' 'the fellow-servants and companions of angels.' But there is no language that can express the sanctity of the priest. He is 'alter Christus;' therefore what measure is there of the perfections that he ought to have attained? S. Alphonsus says, 'Mere sanctifying grace is by no means enough for the receiving of sacred orders; but beyond this interior perfection is required, as the common consent of all the holy Fathers and Doctors with one mouth demands.'[10] S. Thomas says 'that priests serve Christ Him-

[8] S. John Chrys. de Sacerdotio, lib. vi. c. iv.
[9] S. Pet. Dam. contra Clericos Intemp. i. c. vii.
[10] Conc. Prov. Westm. IV. decr. xii. 1-3.

self in the Sacrament of the Altar, for which greater interior sanctity is required than the state of religion requires.'[11] Again he says, 'They who are engaged in the divine ministry acquire a royal dignity, and in virtue ought to be perfect.' And the Church, in ordaining its priests, says that our Lord has shown by word and deed that the ministers of His Church ought to be perfect in faith and action—that is, in the twofold love of God and their neighbour. 'They are chosen and set apart and sanctified for this very end, that they may make others perfect, and that not so much by word as by deed. The best preaching is the priest's life. If he go before his flock in all spiritual perfection, in faith, hope, charity, sanctity, the seven gifts, the twelve fruits, the eight beatitudes, they will follow him. They will be imitators of him, as he is also of Christ.'[12] They will be insensibly drawn, subdued, changed, assimilated to his mind and will,

[11] Conc. Prov. Westm. IV. decr. xii. 1-3

[12] Ibid. decr. ii.

and therefore to the mind and will of Jesus. Blessed is such a priest, the guardian of the Most Holy Sacrament, the friend of his Lord.

3. Lastly, as to the means of attaining perfection. S. Thomas says that perfection consists in keeping the commandments of God; above all, in fulfilment of the two great precepts, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole soul, and thy neighbour as thyself;' for this is the law and the life of charity, and charity is the essential perfection of the soul.[13]

Next is obedience to the living voice of the Church and to the mind of the Church, not only in dogma and discipline, but in its customs, devotions, and judgments; and finally, to the mind of the head of the Church in all his decisions and teaching, even though it be outside the definitions of faith.

Then comes, as a means of perfection, obedience to parents for the young, and to pastors for all, for in them there is an

[13] S. Thomæ. *Sum. Theol.* 2. 2, q. 184.

authority which represents the authority of God.

The obedience of domestic life is a great discipline of humility, piety, and self-control. A good son will make a good priest, and a good daughter will make a good nun. A disobedient son will hardly make an obedient priest, and an unloving daughter will hardly make a Sister of Charity. A good home is a great novitiate.

Next, purity of conscience by the Sacrament of Penance, and cleanness of heart by the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, are the surest means to fidelity to the operations of the Sanctifier.

Finally, a life of counsels, with or without vows, and perseverance in the duties of our state, whatever it be, with regularity, punctuality, and exactness, both removes the hindrances that come between the soul and God, and make the conscience, the heart, and the will delicate, prompt, and generous in obeying the inspirations of the Holy Ghost.

1. There is, then, no one who may not hope to attain this perfection, for the eight beatitudes, which are the highest rule of perfection ever given to man, were given by our Divine Lawgiver to His Apostles to be promulgated to all the nations of the world. There is no one in any lawful state of life who may not be poor in spirit, clean in heart, merciful and meek. There are Saints whom God knows, unknown to the world; the least and the last in the judgment of men who shall one day 'shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.'[14] S. Paul has given a rule of perfection which runs through the homeliest life, and the practice of the best and most necessary things. 'Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do all to the glory of God.'[15] If in our daily food we may glorify Him, how much more in the faculties of our intellect, the affections of our hearts, the actions of our will. There will be a great wonder in the day when this

[14] S. Matt. xiii. 43. [15] 1 Cor. x. 31.

disordered world shall be over, and the first shall be last, and the last first: when the unseen multitude of the humble and despised shall be revealed in the light of God's presence, and some who have been counted Saints among men, it may be, shall hardly be saved.

2. But our Lord has called us all to the eight beatitudes, has promised the grace of perfection to all who seek it. We must ask for it because it is His gift; and we may aspire to it because He loves to bestow it, and to bestow it abundantly beyond all we can ask or think. It is no humility to aim low in our spiritual life. It is no pride to aim high, if we do it not out of a love of our own proper excellence, but out of a desire to glorify Him. Who knows what graces he has lost, and may be losing at this moment, from want of aspiration? If faith and hope and charity had wrought their perfect work in us; if the seven gifts had been spread like sails to catch the breathing of the Spirit of the Sanctifier, we should now be not far

from the kingdom of God. But how many spring-times and seed-times have we lost, how many a summer is past without a harvest, how many an autumn without a vintage. We are standing at the foot of the mountain of the beatitudes. The disciples of Jesus are going up, company by company. The poor, and the simple, and the unlearned, and the mourners, and the despised are going upward, speeding with a wonderful strength and sweetness. Shall we be left behind? Aim higher and higher. Desire the best gifts, for they are promised and given to all who ask. Commit yourselves to the light and love and power of the Sanctifier, for He began the good work in you. *Ipse perficiet.* The work is His, and He will perfect it.

O God the Holy Ghost, who hast sanctified me before I knew Thee, hast led me onward, notwithstanding all my resistance and all the sins by which I have grieved Thee, finish Thy work in me, for it is Thine.

Thou didst begin it, and Thou alone canst make it perfect. I desire to be meek and merciful and clean of heart, and to hunger and thirst after Thee, the Just One, and to be silent under any cross or sorrow, or false accusation, or shame, or hatred, for Thy Name's sake, with the patience of Jesus.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

XVII.

THE LAW OF LIBERTY.

When the Son of God came into the world it was to do not His own will, but the will of His Father. He had said in prophecy, 'Behold, I come to do Thy will, O God.'[1] It was the oblation of Himself in life and in death that redeemed the world. He said, 'My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me;'[2] and in the hour of His agony

[1] Heb. x. 9.

[2] S. John iv. 34.

He said, 'Not as I will, but as Thou wilt.'[3] This was the free-will offering of the Son of God, in the liberty of His Divine Manhood. And in this He is our example.

S. James writes, 'So speak ye, and so do as being to be judged by the law of liberty.'[4] What, then, is this law? It is God who made the law of liberty; the law of bondage is the work of man.

1. The free will of Adam was a law of liberty to itself. It was like the will of God, which is the most perfect liberty and the most perfect law.

2. The law of bondage is the loss of liberty, by which man fell under the law of sin and death. And yet man had still a free will, though wounded and weak. He could serve God freely by the help of the Holy Ghost; and he could sin freely by refusing and quenching His grace. Such is the meaning of S. Paul when he says, 'There is now, therefore, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who

[3] S. Matt. xxvi. 39. [4] S. James ii. 12.

walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit; for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath delivered me from the law of sin and death.'[5]

Now this law of liberty has five degrees.

1. First, it is the law of God written upon the heart by the Holy Ghost. It was written upon the heart of the first Adam: and he broke it. It was written twice on two tables of stone, and the tables and the law were both broken. It was written on the heart of the second Adam by the Holy Ghost, and by Him it is transcribed into the heart of the mystical Body, and of every member of the same. 'This is the testament which I will make the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will give My laws into their mind, and in their hearts I will write them.'[6]

It is therefore an inward and spiritual law, written upon the intellect and governing the will. It is the knowledge of God and of His perfections, of His holiness,

[5] Rom. viii. 1, 2. [6] Heb. viii. 10.

justice, and love as the Original to whose likeness we are made, and therefore as the law of our being in all our living powers of soul and spirit. Our sanctification is conformity to God. 'Walk before Me, and be perfect,'[7] is the law of our perfection. The knowledge of God and the recollection of His presence guide, elevate, and assimilate the soul to Him; for the law written on the heart by the Sanctifier reigns over its affections, and draws it with all its freedom into conformity to His perfections both by light and by love.

2. But next, when this law of liberty was written upon us in our regeneration, our will was made free from the law of sin and death. 'Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end life everlasting.'[8] By our spiritual resurrection we are made free from the eternal debt which we inherited by our original sin. Every regenerate soul is absolved and libe-

[7] Gen. xvii. 1. [8] Rom. vi. 22.

rated from the second death. But by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost it is set free also from the power of sin, which cannot reign where He dwells; for by His sanctifying power the fascination and the love of sin are destroyed. The power of sin is in the love we have to it. It has no power over those who hate it. 'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty'[9] from the guilt, the power, the fascination, and the love of sin, in which consists the law of bondage. 'Being then freed from sin, we have been made servants of justice.'[10]

3. There is yet a third and more perfect degree of liberty, and that is when our will is elevated by the love of God; that is to say, when 'the charity of God is poured forth into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us.' (1) The love of God *super omnia* in that measure detaches the heart from creatures; and they who are detached from creatures are liberated from a manifold bondage. Every inordinate affection is a

[9] 2 Cor. iii. 17. [10] Rom. vi. 18.

loss of liberty. We become dependent for peace and happiness on something which is unstable, uncertain, unsatisfying. The love of God does not destroy, but elevates and perfects all other love to kindred and to friends. But it subordinates every affection to Him. It makes us not indifferent but independent. (2) And this love of God makes us to love His law more than our own will; so that to give up our own will has in it a secret sweetness, making hard things easy. The thought of God, as our motive even in the least things, is both strength and joy. Therefore S. Augustine said, 'Love God, and do what you will;' because a will elevated by the love of God can will nothing that God hates, nothing that God does not will also. What liberty so perfect as theirs, who, being free from all bondage to creatures, offer their will freely to God, and desire nothing but what He wills for them?

4. But we may go one degree higher still. This elevation of the will by love to God brings also a conformity of our will to

the divine will: *pondus voluntatis amor.* The will is the love; when governed by reason it is the highest and noblest freedom of the soul; when ungoverned it is sensual or devilish, irrational and gross, or refined and malicious. The will of Satan is malice; it is in energetic and ceaseless variance with charity, reason, and God in all His perfections and in all the operations of His holy will. But a will elevated and inflamed with the love of God is so conformed to the will of God that, as the shadow follows the substance, so it follows every motion of God's will in all the manifold wisdom of His ways. It loves what God loves, it hates what God hates. It has the same thoughts, desires, and aims. It desires that His will should be done as in heaven so on earth, in every heart, especially in our own. It takes to itself, as a reproof and as a rule, the plaintive words of S. Paul, 'All men seek the things that are their own, and not the things that are Jesus Christ's.'[11] It seeks the salva-

[11] Phil. ii. 21.

tion of men, the sanctification of souls, the diffusion of the faith, the expansion of the Church, the gathering in of the elect, of the innocent, and of the penitent; the restoration of unity among the disciples of Jesus, the multiplication of all good upon earth in thought, word, and deed; the extirpation of all sin; the glory of God in all its extent. All His creatures were made for His glory. But 'of His own will He hath begotten us again by the word of truth, that we should be a beginning' and the firstfruits 'of His creatures;'[12] that is, of the new creation, which is for His greater glory; and they who are conformed to the image of His Son by the love of the Holy Ghost are for His greatest glory.

5. The last and highest degree of this law of liberty is when the will becomes a law to itself. When love is ruled by reason, and reason by faith, then the will with all its liberty freely unites itself with God in spontaneous obedience to His law. The instincts

[12] S. James i. 18.

of the heart and the dictates of the will are all for God. They who reach this degree can say, 'O, how have I loved Thy law, O Lord; it is my meditation all the day.'[13] 'The law of Thy mouth is good to me above thousands of gold and silver.'[14] 'I meditated on Thy commandments which I loved. And I lifted up my hands to Thy commandments which I loved.'[15] 'I have loved Thy commandments above gold and the topaz.'[16] 'Much peace have they that love Thy law, and to them there is no stumbling-block.'[17] 'The judgments of the Lord are true, justified in themselves, more to be desired than gold and many precious stones, and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.'[18]

It is of such men that S. Paul says, 'The law is not made for the just man, but for the unjust and disobedient.'[19] That is to say, as he that is skilled in reading has no need

[13] Ps. cxviii. 97.
[14] Ibid. 72.
[15] Ibid. 47, 48.
[16] Ibid. 127.
[17] Ps. cxviii. 165.
[18] Ps. xviii. 10, 11.
[19] Tim. i. 9.

to spell his words, and he that is skilled in harmony has no need to learn the octave, so they that love God do by the law of their own will all that He commands. The prohibitions of the law are needless. They that love their neighbour have no need to hear 'Thou shalt not kill;' and they that love God have no need to be commanded 'Thou shalt have no gods beside Me.'

But S. John goes beyond even these great words of S. Paul. He says, 'Whosoever is born of God committeth not sin, for His seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God.'[20] He does not commit sin because his life is holy. He cannot, because his heart is sanctified. The Sanctifier reigns over him. The seed of sanctifying grace and charity and wisdom and power abide in him. So sin is a moral, not an absolute, impossibility. Until confirmed in grace the will may abuse its liberty. But it can only do so by violating its whole new nature, and going against its highest

[20] 1 S. John iii. 9.

and most constraining instincts, and passing from the law of liberty to the law of bondage.

S. Paul describes this law of liberty as a life of love and a life of the Cross.

He says, 'The charity of Christ urgeth us;[21] that is, presses upon our heart and will with the continuous and constraining sense of His love, generosity, fervour, self-sacrifice for us. 'The charity of Christ urgeth us' onward in love, generosity, fervour, and sacrifice of self, 'because we thus judge: that if one died for all, all were dead.' We were lost eternally, the Vision of God was hidden from us for ever, and the second death was our inevitable lot. But by His death we live eternally; and 'He so died that they who live should no more live unto themselves, but unto Him that died for them and rose again;'[22] that is, they are not their own, and cannot live for their own end, or by their own will without robbery, ingratitude, and baseness. We owe Him love for love,

[21] 2 Cor. v. 14. [22] Ibid. 15.

generosity for generosity, fervour for fervour, sacrifice for sacrifice, oblation of self to Him for His self-oblation for us to the Father. What He freely did without price for us, we are bound by the law of liberty and of love freely to do in return for Him. As He has been to us, so are we bound to be to Him. 'Let that mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus,' means, Let your heart and will, by their own free choice, be like His in all the liberty of obedience unto death. These are great words, yet they are the words of the Holy Ghost. They mark out the way and the motive of a Christian life. S. Paul goes even beyond this. He says, 'With Christ I am nailed to the Cross; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life that I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and delivered Himself for me.'[23] He is our new life from the dead; by Him we live, and love, and freely serve Him.

[23] Phil. ii. 5.

Lastly, as if he had not said enough, he adds, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.'[24] 'And I unto the world.' Who can dare say these words? And yet they have been said by all who have offered themselves to God by the law of liberty. All worldly affections have fallen off from them like withered leaves. Their eyes and ears and hearts are insensible to beauty and its sweetness, as if they were dead. The world itself is dead to them; like the fig-tree over which Jesus said, 'May no fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever.'[25]

This is a state high indeed, but to which all may ascend.

It is not a state in which temptation will not harass without, and the root of sin will not vex within. For S. Paul had attained it, and yet the messenger of Satan was still with him,[26] and he still chastised himself lest

[24] Gal. vi. 14.
[25] S. Matt. xxi. 19.
[26] 2 Cor. xii. 7.

he should be a castaway.[27] But he said in calm hope, 'There is laid up for me a crown of life which the just Judge shall render to me at that day.'[28] It is not a state of perpetual peace or light or sweetness; for the closest union with God may be overcast and obscure, so that when it is surest it is least perceived. Of this the desolation of Jesus on the Cross is a divine revelation; and God's chief servants have walked in darkness, as S. Paul of the Cross, who said that in no day for fifty years was he free from desolation.

It is not always a state of special consolation or high state of prayer, such as we read in some lives of Saints; for many Saints seem to have lived and died in the way of pure faith, in great spiritual austerity, and intimate union with God. Of these things, too, it is not necessary to speak. They that know them need no words; they that do not know them cannot understand.

There is one thing in which all who reach

[27] 1 Cor. ix. 27. [28] 2 Tim. iv. 8.

this law of liberty are alike. Their will never changes. It is one with the will of God. 'He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.'[29] The Sanctifier dwells in them, and reigns over them in all their liberty; which is freely and continually given as an oblation to their Divine Master.

O God the Holy Ghost, who hast regenerated, renewed, and sanctified me to this hour, to Thee I give my will with all its liberty. Lead me, and I will follow Thee. If Thou wilt call me to any hard task, or to any heavy cross, make my will willing to bear it. Thou canst make the unwilling to will freely what Thou wilt. Inspire my will with the love of God, lift it and bind it to His will, that I may freely do and suffer all my days what His most holy, wise, just, and sweet will shall ordain for me.

Jesus, have mercy on me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

[29] 1 Cor. vi. 17.

XVIII.

DEVOTION TO THE HOLY GHOST.

We have now traced in outline the office of the Sanctifier, which is appropriated to the Holy Ghost in the work of the salvation of souls. As the Father is our Maker, the Son our Redeemer, so the Holy Ghost is our Sanctifier; and yet creation, redemption, and sanctification are all equally works of the Ever-blessed Trinity. This must be always borne in mind lest we seem to divide what is one and indissoluble, and to imply that we owe to any one Person of the Ever-blessed Three any love, worship, or devotion which is not equally due to All.

Nevertheless the whole of our thoughts hitherto have shown us that we are in immediate union or contact, so to speak, with the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier. It is He who 'filled the Apostles;'[1] Peter was 'filled with the Holy Ghost;'[2] Stephen and Barnabas were 'full of the Holy Ghost;'[3] the

[1] Acts ii. 4. [2] Ibid. iv. 8. [3] Ibid. vi. 5, xi. 24.

'disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost.'[4] It is through Him that we are the temple of God.[5] It is He 'Who is given to us.'[6] It is He 'who maketh intercession' in us with pleas of supplication which no man can utter.[7] It is He by whom we say 'the Lord Jesus,'[8] and without Him we should not know Jesus. It is He who abides upon us as the Unction that teacheth us all things.[9] All this is in the office which has been appropriated or given to Him in the mystery of gathering out and sanctifying the elect. Therefore in this office, and as ever present with us in our hearts and in the Church of God, we offer Him our distinct adoration.

The reasons of this are many; but three will suffice.

1. First it is due to Him for the glory of His Person. (1) He is God co-eternal, co-

[4] Acts xiii. 52.
[5] Eph. ii. 22.
[6] Rom. v. 5.
[7] Rom. viii. 26.
[8] 1 Cor. xii. 2.
[9] 1 S. John ii. 27.

equal, co-infinite, consubstantial. He is uncreated Being, Wisdom, and Love. 'The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten; the Son is of the Father alone, neither made nor created, but begotten; the Holy Ghost is of the Father and of the Son, neither made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding.'

And in this Trinity there is neither before nor after, neither greater nor less, but the whole Three Persons are co-eternal and co-equal. The Holy Ghost, then, is the eternal Beauty, Sweetness, and Truth. Such He is in Himself, but (2) He is the Bond of perfection in the Holy Trinity; the Terminus or Bound of all that is divine; the Love[10] of the Father and the Son. (3) Lastly He is the Finger of God's right hand by which He wrote the witness of God upon all the world, and the laws of God on two tables of stone. The Finger which created all things by the lightest touch of almighty power, He is in immediate contact with

[10] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 1. q. 37.

created things. He, the Uncreated, is in union, and, as S. Gregory of Nazianzum says, in substantial union, not consubstantial unity, with the just. His words are, the Holy Ghost 'is no longer present only in operation as heretofore; but He is with us, and converses with us, substantially,[11] so to speak; for it was fitting that as the Son had dwelt amongst us bodily, so the Holy Ghost should be manifested bodily, Christ returning to Himself, and the Holy Ghost descending to us.' That is, the Son was manifest in His natural body, the Holy Ghost is manifested by the mystical body. 'Ubi Ecclesia, ibi Spiritus,' as S. Irenæus says.

2. But further we owe Him a distinct and special adoration for the glory of His work.

(1) That work is twofold,—in the old creation and in the new. God made all things by His Wisdom, which is the Son; but He

[11] S. Greg. Naz. orat. xli. in Pentec, tom. i. p. 740; *Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, p. 45.

accomplished what Wisdom designed by the power and efficacy of the Holy Ghost. It was by Him that all things which lay hid in the power of God came forth, each one clothed in its form and signed with the seal of the eternal Wisdom. In the great six days He was borne upon the face of the deep, brooding over all things as they arose each in succession. Everything was disposed and ordered and perfected by Him: the heaven and the earth; the waters above and below the firmament; the light and the changes of day and night; the earth with its growth of herbs and trees; and the offspring of the earth and sea and air—the beasts of the field, the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air—all ascending in perfection in a scale of ever-expanding wisdom and beauty. All this was His work.

But all this was only the prelude to the greatest work of almighty power. There was no man to till the ground, no image of the Creator. On the sixth day He made the chief and crown of creation. And He

fashioned him to the image and to the likeness of God. He made him of the slime or dust of the earth; but He breathed into his face the breath of life, the *spiraculum vitæ;* and man became a living soul, a being earthly because of the dust, heavenly because spiritual, being not a reflection only, but a created image of the uncreated intelligence, memory, and will; with a freedom and a power to originate his own actions, perfect in body and soul, with a threefold perfection—natural, which belongs to humanity as such; supernatural, because when He breathed into the face of Adam He breathed also into the face of his soul; and he was constituted in grace—that is, the Sanctifier entered into him, and imparted to him not His own uncreated sanctity, which is incommunicable, but a created sanctity, which dwelt by infusion as a permanent quality in his soul, elevating him to a supernatural perfection of original justice, sonship, and inheritance. And from the union of these two perfections arose a third, the

preternatural; that is, immortality of the body and perfect order and harmony of the soul under the reign of a perfect and holy will. Such was man, the most perfect work of the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier, in the first creation.

(2) But the second creation is greater still, and for this we owe Him again a distinct love and adoration. The three greatest works of God's omnipotence are the Divine Maternity, the Incarnation, and the union of the Saints with God.[12] They all touch upon the infinite and uncreated. But the accomplishing of these three has been appropriated to the Sanctifier.

The first and, till then, the greatest work of the new creation was the singular and pre-eminent sanctification, or Immaculate Conception, of the Blessed Mother of God. She was the firstfruits of the Holy Ghost, the only soul, since the innocence of the first Adam and of the first Eve in Paradise, on whom original sin had never cast its sha-

[12] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* 1. q. 25, 6.

dow. In the moment of its creation the soul of the Blessed Virgin, as the soul of the first Eve, was replenished and invested with the grace of the Holy Ghost. It was therefore never, for a moment of time, in the state of privation in which original sin consists. And this singular sanctification was the work of the Sanctifier, and given for the foreseen merits of Jesus Christ. She was exempted from original sin, and prepared to be the sanctuary of God in the Incarnation. And surely the least grace proportionate to the Divine Maternity is that she should be without sin. No grace less than immense can be conceived which bears proportion to the dignity of Mother of God. The immensity of her second sanctification, and the glory of her third, do not transcend the measure of sanctity proportioned to the office and state of her who should bear into the world as her own Infant the Eternal Son of God. This was, then, the first work of the Sanctifier in preparing for the Incarnation.

And the second is the Incarnation itself. The words of the Archangel were, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; therefore that Holy [One], which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.'[13] He shall be called because He is; for all God's words are divine truth. Therefore the Sacred Humanity—the body with all its perfections, the soul with all its powers—was created by the Holy Ghost and sanctified in the moment of creation, 'by the will of the Father,' as the priest says in the Holy Mass, 'and by the co-operation of the Holy Ghost.'[14] The Son assumed our manhood. He clothed Himself in His sacerdotal raiment, the Father and the Holy Ghost assisting in His investiture. But the agency of the Holy Ghost wrought this creative act; and the Sanctifier replenished the Deified Humanity of Jesus with the plenitude of sanctifying

[13] S. Luke ii. 35.

[14] Second collect before Communion.

grace. Therefore, as the Fathers say, the manhood of Jesus had a twofold unction, the one from the uncreated sanctity of the Son, and the other from the created and infused grace of the Sanctifier. In Him there was not faith indeed, because there was vision; nor hope[15] as a virtue; but there was charity, and the seven gifts, the fruits of the Holy Ghost—so far as they do not imply sin—and the perfections of the eight beatitudes.

Lastly, there is the creation of the mystical Body of Christ, which is the Church. The indissoluble union of the Head with the Body, and of the Body with Himself, is the work of the Sanctifier; so also is the unity of the members, the imperishable life, the perpetual illumination, the infallible guidance, the divine voice of the Church. And as with the Immaculate Conception, so with the Infallibility. To know the truth and not to err is surely the least endowment of the body which was created to

[15] S. Thomæ, *Sum. Theol.* p. iii. q. 7, art. 4.

teach all nations and to be 'the light of the world.' S. Irenæus says, 'Ubi Spiritus ibi Ecclesia et omnis gratia.' From this creation of the visible Church springs the Communion of Saints, and the bliss of the just is made perfect in the Beatific Vision. Their union with God is through the indwelling of the Sanctifier, who has made them perfect and united them with Himself. Though the light of glory is not the Holy Ghost, it is His gift.

3. Lastly, we owe Him love and devotion because of His work in each of us, one by one. The whole of this little book has spoken of this work, therefore our last words may be few.

We owe to Him our regeneration, which was the first resurrection, over which the second death, if we be faithful, can have no power. He raised us from death to life, from the natural to the supernatural order, and put upon us the glory to be the sons of God.

And though it may be that we have fallen, and perhaps again and again, from

that spiritual life into spiritual death, He has raised us again and again, by absolution and restoration of His own indwelling presence.

In our confirmation He made us to be perfect Christians and good soldiers of Jesus Christ. In every Sacrament He gave us sacramental grace, especially in Holy Communion; that is, a radiance of light, and an effluence of grace through the most Precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

And out of the Holy Sacraments He has, all our life long, wrought within us, by actual graces, by preventing grace, by lights and impulses, inspirations and irradiations, by co-operating graces, liberating us from our evil habits and sustaining us in our weakness, restraining, guiding, and sheltering us, always, everywhere, in everything, save only when we resisted or quenched Him, and sealing us with the signet of the Living God as heirs of His kingdom. What more could He do for us? And what have we done for Him?

How often have we quenched His light, or suffered it to die out, like the foolish virgins!

How often have we resisted Him, turning a blind eye to His light, a dull ear to His voice, a sluggish or a cold heart to His generous love!

How often we have grieved Him by manifold provocations, as by insincerities of word and deed; by insensibility in His very presence; by inconstancy after many restorations on His part, and many protestations on ours; by indifference in the midst of all His graces, gifts, warnings, and pleadings with our unloving and ungenerous hearts; by self-love, seeking our own things, even in His service; by meanness, tenderness to self; by a divided service and the kiss of Judas!

We owe Him two things so long as life lasts.

1. First, we owe Him daily a habitual adoration; that is, love, thanksgiving, praise, worship. He dwells in us, and pervades

our whole inward life. We have no need to seek Him abroad, for He is in our hearts. There is His altar, before which we should bow down. There is His throne, to which we owe the obedience of our inmost life.

2. We owe Him next a daily and habitual reparation for ourselves and for the sins of others. This latter is too large a subject, and we must leave it with few words.

The reparation we owe Him for ourselves will best consist in three things.

(1) First, in mortifying the particular sins by which we have quenched, resisted, or grieved Him; sins against the light of conscience and the law of God; sins of worldliness or of the animal life of reason and of will; sins against sincerity, sanctity, the seven gifts, against charity or faith.

(2) Secondly, in avoidance, not only of the temptations by which we have fallen, but of the occasions of sin, which have, by our sinfulness, been turned into temptations to ourselves and to others.

(3) Thirdly, by practising, and praying every morning for, the graces most opposed to our known faults. Make a list of faults and ask forgiveness; and over against them a list of graces, and ask for them day by day. And for our adorations and prayers, the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, the *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, the Litany of the Holy Ghost, the devotions of the Little Handbook of the Confraternity will suggest thoughts and affections enough for the longest life.

Give your whole heart to Him with simplicity, and trust Him with all confidence, for He is loving, generous, tender, and delicate in all His works. *Res delicata Spiritus Sanctus.* He never calls you to anything that He will not strengthen you to do, nor asks of you anything which, if you be faithful to Him, He will not make you to will as freely as He has willed you to do it for His sake.

Make some prayers of your own, and in your own words. None are so real as those which spring from our own conscious need.

Some such words as these may express what you desire to obtain:

O God the Holy Ghost, whom I have slighted, grieved, resisted, from my childhood unto this day, reveal unto me Thy Personality, Thy Presence, Thy Power. Make me to know Thy sevenfold gifts: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and fortitude, of knowledge and piety, and of the fear of the Lord. Make me to be of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. O Thou who art the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, O Thou who art the Love of the Father and of the Son, O Thou who baptisest with fire and sheddest abroad the love of God in our hearts, shed abroad Thy love in my heart. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after: not wealth, rank, power, worldly home, worldly happiness, or any worldly good, but one drop of that holy flame, one drop of that heavenly fire to kindle me, and set me all on fire with the love of God. Let

that holy flame burn up and consume in me every spot and soil of the flesh and of the spirit. Purify me sevenfold with the fire of Thy love. Consume me as a living sacrifice acceptable unto Thee. Kindle me with zeal, melt me with sorrow, that I may live the life and die the death of a fervent penitent.

Jesus, have mercy upon me.

Holy Mary, pray for me.

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